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KANT, LOTZE,  
AND  
RITSCHL.

*A CRITICAL EXAMINATION*

BY

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TO THE  
REV. SAMUEL DAVIDSON, D.D., LL.D.,  
FORMERLY  
PROFESSOR OF BIBLICAL LITERATURE  
IN THE  
LANCASHIRE INDEPENDENT COLLEGE, MANCHESTER,  
A SLIGHT TOKEN OF GRATITUDE FOR MANY KINDNESSES,  
FROM ONE OF HIS OLD STUDENTS,  
THE TRANSLATOR.



## TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

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DURING the last fifteen or twenty years a controversy has been going on in Germany, which, like some Indian cyclone, has had for its pivot the theological system of Albrecht Ritschl. From year to year, as the number of his pupils and disciples increased, and as others became aware of the true tendency of his teachings, it has grown alike in compass and intensity. Things have looked, in fact, as though the German theological world were destined to split into two great camps, whose respective cries would be—"Here, Ritschl!" "Here, Anti-Ritschl!" Now that the master has gone, indeed, it is not at all unlikely that the controversy will to some extent subside; or, at all events, his followers—being no longer held in awe, as it was natural they should to some extent be, even though unconsciously to themselves, by his imperial and imperious voice and eye—will further develope individualities and differences, which have already begun to manifest themselves; and thus the unity of view and sentiment that has hitherto made them appear and think themselves formidable will be broken up.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Albrecht Ritschl was born in Berlin, 25th March 1822. After completing his studies at various universities, he became in due course Professor Extraordinary at Bonn in 1853, and Professor in Ordinary in 1860. In 1864 he was called to Göttingen, where he remained till his recent death. His chief works are—*Das Evangelium Marcions*, 1846; *Die Entstehung der altkatholischen Kirche*, 2nd ed. 1857; *Die christl. Lehre v. d. Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, 3 vols. 2nd ed. 1882-83; *Schleiermacher's Reden über die Religion*, 1874; *Geschichte des Pietismus*, 3 vols. 1880-86; *Unterricht in der christlichen Religion*, 1887; *Theologie und Metaphysik*, 2nd ed. 1887.

The controversy in question has given rise to a whole flood of pamphlets, articles in journals, books, and portions of books, devoted for the most part either to the refutation or defence of Ritschl's theological positions—the former, of course, from various points of view, the strictly orthodox or “churchly,” as it likes to style itself; the moderately orthodox; and the conciliatory. Nearly all the attacks referred to have been directed against the subject-matter of Ritschl's system. The specialty of the work of which a translation is now offered to the English public is, that as the author himself tells us, it is in the strictest sense critical. Herr Stählin does not directly assail the principles laid down, but asks: “Granted your principles as formulated by yourself, how have you carried them out? Have you carried them out consistently? Whither do they conduct us when they are consistently carried out? How far is your own system an illustration of the logical application of your principles?”

The average Briton has very little sympathy with this method of procedure. He can understand assailing a principle; setting up one principle in opposition to another; charging a system with error; indeed, he rather enjoys the spectacle, and, with the love of a fight which he displays in other spheres, soon sides with the one party or the other—not always to the advantage of the truth. But as to exposing the logical inconsistencies into which a writer has fallen, and tracing out the logical results that flow from his positions and arguments—the former, as a rule, he is apt to think useless, the latter unfair. As to practical results logically involved, he asks, who intends them to follow? and how very unlikely, not to say impossible, that they should ever be deduced. The traveller in the Alps who sets a mass of snow in motion may not intend to cause an avalanche; yet he may have set in motion forces which, under given conditions, will inevitably bring about the result, and in consequence produce untold disaster. Not less true is this in the

realm of mind. But just this fact it is that men are so loth to recognise—the fact that, given adequate time, ordinary circumstances, and no counteracting influences, principles will as infallibly produce the practical results logically involved in them, as natural forces the effects they are fitted to work. History, to him who is not blind, is crowded with illustrations of this truth.<sup>1</sup>

The questions may be asked: What has this controversy to do with us in Britain? And how do Kant and Lotze come to be introduced into it?

Among the answers that might be given to the first question are these: *First*, that in these days no nation can isolate itself; least of all can a nation like ours, between which and Germany intercourse and ties become closer every year, isolate itself. What Germany thinks to-day, Britain will begin to think to-morrow. The reverse is, of course, also true. We have given perhaps quite as many original impulses to the thought of the world as our Teutonic relatives across the German Ocean. Locke, Hume, Berkeley, Herbert Spencer, and Darwin have been, in their way, as potent factors in the intellectual life of Europe as Kant, Fichte, Hegel, Herbart, Lotze, and others in Germany, not to mention France and the rest of Europe, though, for various reasons,—chief among which, I believe, is the fact that the two great English universities were for nearly two centuries close corporations, and therefore not only impoverished the life of the excluded part of the nation, but, as all such corporations are apt to do, themselves stagnated,—we, for a long time, fell behind in nearly every branch of theology, as well as in most other departments of learning.

*Another* answer is, that Germans are very much in the habit of doing just what we are equally prone to neglect, namely, to

<sup>1</sup> As Mr. Gladstone well says: "Logical continuity and moral causation are stronger than the conscious thought of man: they mock it, and play with it, and constrain it, even without its knowledge, to suit their purpose."—*Gleanings*, vol. vii. 225.

follow out principles to their legitimate logical conclusions. They develop in the form of compact systems the ideas which we leave like the unsown seed of the store. Perhaps a ground may be assigned for this, namely, that whilst the German is theoretically logical, he has been compelled to be practically illogical; whilst the Englishman, on the contrary, feels an almost irresistible impulse, and has been more free, to carry out into practice what logic enjoins, but is therefore instinctively cautious about giving the reins to logic when dealing with principles.

This difference makes the study of German thought exceedingly instructive and profitable, that is, for those who are of an "understanding *heart*." If we choose, we can there secure experience at second-hand; at all events, we need not set about getting our own experience blindfold.

Now Ritschl's system and the controversy to which it has given rise have embodied and brought to light issues to which it will be well for us in this country to give heed, that is, those of us who do not wish Christianity to be resolved, as a French writer has said of a certain view of prayer, into a kind of *gymnastique spirituelle*, or into a system of laws analogous to an economic system, as some regard it; who, in a word, recoil from converting a spiritual *dynamic* into a more or less perfect classification of spiritual principles, which may become a more or less complete *regulative*.

But there is the *further* answer, that Ritschl is not without both conscious and unconscious disciples among ourselves. A considerable number of English-speaking students have come under his influence as a man and teacher, and they have more or less completely assimilated his principles. More importance is to be attached, however, to the kindred tendencies which have arisen in our midst, independently of any influence he could have exercised. These tendencies, in point of fact, as Herr Stählin points out, have the same roots as Ritschl's system—roots which explain both the rise of the system and



the extraordinary welcome it has received. This point, however, brings me to the consideration of the second question, namely, why Kant, Lange, and Lotze are included within the range of the inquiry?

The *raison d'être* of Herr Stählin's work is, of course, Ritschl,—the exposure of Ritschl's inconsistencies and consequent theological unsoundness. But as Ritschl had over and over again asserted that his theological opponents could not touch him unless they first overthrew the philosophical principle on which he had consciously and purposely based his system, Herr Stählin resolved to take up the challenge. The philosophical basis in question was a theory of cognition:—it will be seen from the work itself that Ritschl lays it down as a necessity that every scientific inquirer should start and proceed in harmony with a definite theory of cognition; and for his own theory he professed to be chiefly indebted to Lotze. This necessitated an examination of Lotze; but Lotze did not stand alone; he, as will appear, was essentially a Kantian. Hence the inclusion of Kant within the range of the inquiry; and, for similar reasons, a briefer consideration of the Neo-Kantian movement had also to be embraced within its scope.

This account of Herr Stählin's aim and procedure furnishes another reason—and that a weighty one—why his critical examination merits the careful attention of English-speaking Christian thinkers.

Kant, Lange, and Lotze are exerting a great and ever-increasing influence both in Britain and America. Alongside of Herbert Spencer, between whom and them there are many points of affinity, they are at the present moment our real philosophical leaders. We have, indeed, our Hegelian reaction; and, considered simply as reaction, one may be thankful for it; but most of our "men of light and leading" in natural science and psychology, and even literature, are more or less consciously disciples of the thinkers criticized in this

work, especially as regards the point on the examination of which Herr Stählin expends his strength, namely, their *theory of cognition*.

In illustration and confirmation of this statement, I may refer to Professor's Huxley's little work on Hume. After telling us that "the business of philosophy is to answer three questions—What can I know? What ought I to do? and, For what may I hope?" he goes on to say, "it is obviously impossible to answer the question, What can we know? unless there is a clear understanding as to what is meant by knowledge" (pp. 48, 49). "The first problem cannot be approached without the examination of the contents of the mind, and the determination of how much of these contents may be called knowledge" (p. 49). Now, the results of this examination are "embodied in the science of psychology" (p. 50). "The contents of mind are impressions, that is, sensations of smell, taste, hearing, sight, touch, resistance; pleasure and pain; relations of co-existence, succession, similarity and dissimilarity; ideas, which are copies or reproductions in memory of the foregoing" (pp. 71, 72). "Neither simple sensation nor simple emotion constitutes knowledge; but when impressions of relation are added to these impressions or their ideas, knowledge arises. All knowledge is the knowledge of likenesses and unlikenesses, co-existences and successions" (p. 72). He further ridicules the "pure metaphysicians" for affirming that "the simplest act of sensation contains two terms and a relation—the sensitive subject, the sensigenous object, and that masterful entity, the Ego. From which great triad, as from a Gnostic Trinity, emanates an endless procession of other logical shadows and all the *Fata Morgana* of philosophical dream-land."

Whoever reads Herr Stählin's work will see that Professor Huxley, Kant, Lange, and Lotze are as like to each other as they well can be. I quote Professor Huxley, not as a repre-

sentative of the philosophical experts,—that he certainly is not, for outside his own special domain, in which his eminence is unquestionable, he has hitherto behaved like a petulant dilettante, not least in his book on Hume,—but as the recognised spokesman of the scientific “Philistines;” and there can be no doubt that, in his view, the human mind can boast of no knowledge save of the relations of what is or *seems* (p. 63) to be given in and by sense.

Similar perilous teaching has been extensively given in days past to men whose vocation was primarily to be the preaching of the “realities of the invisible world”—realities which, according to this philosophy, can never enter the mind; and as to the relations of which either to each other or to men, nothing therefore can be affirmed. Were this the place, proof enough might be adduced; nor has such teaching, in point of fact, altogether ceased. In proof, and by way of illustration, I may refer to a pamphlet which recently came into my hands, entitled, *Philosophy and Faith: A Plea for Agnostic Belief*, by James M. Hodgson, D.Sc., etc.,<sup>1</sup> from which I gather that the author substantially agrees with Professor Huxley so far as “knowledge” is concerned. He quotes with approval that writer’s words: “Agnosticism professes itself unable to discover the indispensable conditions of either positive or negative knowledge in many propositions, respecting which, not only the vulgar, but philosophers of the more sanguine sort [*i.e.* theologians as well as philosophers], revel in the luxury of unqualified assurance” (p. 6). Knowledge proper, Dr. Hodgson assumes, is concerned solely with sensuous cognition or sensuous experience. He differs, it is true, from Professor Huxley in maintaining that “religious faith” really does give us an “unqualified assurance” respecting objects which scientists and rational philosophers treat as uncertain, because unknowable (p. 6).

<sup>1</sup> Professor of the Science of Religion and Apologetics in the Lancashire Independent College, Manchester; published in 1885.

But what is this faith concerning which he quotes Tennyson's lines,—

We have but faith, we cannot know ;  
For knowledge is of things we *see*.

The nearest approach to a definition is to the effect that "the faith of theism is the spontaneous and inevitable recognition by the instincts of human nature of the divine self-manifestation" (p. 22). "By the very make of our being," he adds immediately after, "we are compelled" to recognise causation, harmony, intelligible rational order in the world around us: these we "intuitively refer to a supernatural Person." In addition, "the sense of dependence and moral obligation naturally and almost inevitably attach themselves to the same supernatural Person" (p. 22). But "why should we regard these subjective convictions"—which, be it observed, as expounded by our author are partly "intuitions" and partly "inferences"<sup>1</sup>—as objectively valid and veracious? "Knowledge being wholly and solely of [sensuous] phenomena, of the Ego and of the Non-Ego underlying the phenomena of conscious [sensuous] experience, we know and can know nothing: all we have is the instinctive conviction of their existence" (p. 23). As to these "intuitive convictions" we can only have "intuitive certainty." "We can neither prove nor justify them, nor advance any reason for our faith in them. They *may be* a purely subjective illusion, but practically they are found to be alike indispensable, serviceable, and sufficient" (pp. 23, 24). "Our only ground of justification for any of our beliefs—in an external world, a personal entity, the relation of cause and effect, our personal dependence on God, in the obligation of the divine will upon us as a moral law—is that so our nature prompts and impels us" (p. 25).

This is obviously pure phenomenalism, as far as *knowledge* is concerned: in objective realities behind phenomena we

<sup>1</sup> And if "inferences," surely the "reason" must have something to do with establishing the certainty, which is elsewhere denied.

simply *believe*—Dr. Hodgson says—*because we must*. Whether this necessitation is as stringent as he thinks, and whether it extends to all that he includes, seems to me very doubtful; but this is not the place to argue the question out. I confess, however, my own conviction, that should it be once taken for granted as a settled point that knowledge proper is possible only with regard to sensuous phenomena and certain of their relations, the faith in which Dr. Hodgson and those who go with him entrench themselves will soon be treated by educated men in general as it is already treated by many, namely, as a form of self-persuasion; that is, as a pleasing and, for the time, possibly useful self-delusion.

I might further refer also to the agnosticism which is filtering down into thousands of minds all over Christendom, who know little and care less for any mere theory of cognition, but are swayed by the authority of men whose own attitude actually is either determined or justified by such a theory. Within the Christian Churches of this country, and even among its ministers, it is taking the form of aversion to systematic, or dogmatic, or speculative theology. The question is asked very much in the tone of Pilate's, *What is truth?* "What's the use? what can we know? whose theory is the correct one?" And so the great problems which in former days absorbed the interest and effort of the highest and healthiest Christian intellects are passed over not unfrequently with ill-concealed aversion or scepticism, or even disdain. A like impatience, too, is largely influencing the Christian laity. The tap-root of all this semi-conscious agnosticism draws its chief nourishment, unknown to itself, from the soil of Kantism—from the theory of cognition which it is the aim of this book to hoist on its own petard.

What we really have here to do with, therefore, is a theory of cognition; or, in other words, with a particular view of the human intellect or reason, and its relation to the environment within which it is placed. The three questions on which the

whole discussion turns are, *Is the invisible world, especially God, as real a factor of man's environment as the visible world, especially his fellow-men? Does that environment, visible and invisible, really reveal ITSELF IN what are called phenomena? And is the intellect of man constituted so as not only to take up this self-revealing environment into itself through the various organs appropriate to the several parts thereof, but also gradually to understand it?* Christianity answers, Yes; the Christian Church has always taken it for granted: and neither Christianity nor the Church can stand if either of these three questions be answered in the negative. A word or two may be permitted me regarding the proper answers to the three questions just formulated.

As to the *first*, a consistent believer in the Biblical teachings must first and foremost deny that the visible cosmos constitutes a complete, self-contained, independent whole; and must, contrariwise, maintain that the invisible and visible spheres constitute one great whole, neither separated nor separable from the other, each acting in a thousand ways on the other. The former is no more complete in itself than any one of the many material systems of forces and relations—say the chemical or botanical system—which constitute the mundane system is complete within itself, and unrelated to the great material whole to which it belongs. And as each minor system receives influences from and returns them to the other systems to which it is correlated, so the visible and invisible systems act and react on each other—the former being in a special degree dependent on the latter. This seems to me a fundamental Biblical truth, which has never yet found more than a very partial recognition even within the Christian Church; and the ignoring of which must necessarily render Christianity *à priori* unintelligible and incredible.

As to the *second* question. Much as has been advanced of late years on physiological grounds in favour of the difference between perception and its real or supposed cause, it neither



is nor can be demonstrated that when there is an *appearance* nothing really appears. When one is told—this is mere appearance, one has to ask in return, What do you mean by mere appearance? Common sense thinks appearance to be an activity, or a result of the activity, of a something that appears; and that when something appears, that is, shows itself, comes forth, it really does show itself, it really does come forth. Why not? It may be replied, there is no resemblance between the “affection” of the nerve connecting the eye with the brain, and the picture of a face or landscape, or what not, which it is supposed to transmit,—not to mention other difficulties. This may seem plausible if the “affection” in question be merely a sort of mechanical movement, as is often assumed; but as no one has yet either observed the movement or established it on stringent rational grounds, one may surely suspend judgment, and meanwhile believe that after all we really do perceive what we think we perceive, though the *modus operandi* is as yet a secret. As Herr Stählin urges, the noumenon really is given, or gives itself to us in the phenomenon, the thing-in-itself in its appearance. Either this, or else phenomena are subjective illusions, of the reality of which we may for a longer or shorter period be fully assured, but which will not stand the tests that a scientific age is sure to apply to them. The starting-point is wrong; the initial concession is unwarranted.

And now a closing word on the *third* question, Whether the human intellect is constituted so as to take up its environment into itself, as that environment reveals itself through or by means of the corresponding organs, and to understand it? The unsophisticated mind takes this for granted as far as the material part of that environment is concerned—perhaps, too, with regard to the invisible part of the cosmic whole. Practically, too, the former is not questioned by those whose vocation is the exact study of nature. The only real difficulty lies with the relation between the invisible sphere, especially God, and the human

mind. Were there no books in existence professing to contain communications made from God, and to embody and record experiences of direct divine action; and were there not immense numbers of men in the world whose lives are more or less dominated by the conviction, not only that the experiences recorded in the aforementioned books are what they profess to be, but also that they themselves have been the subject of kindred if not identical experiences, we should probably hear little of theories of cognition *restricting* knowledge to the sensuous domain. Whatever may be the reason, those whom Paul calls *wise men after the flesh* have in all times and countries objected to the claims of the religious to be religious because God had revealed Himself to them and touched their souls. This claim has been *foolishness to them*; and feeling, as men always do, the necessity of justifying themselves, at all events *to themselves*, they have resorted to some apparently scientific theory of cognition like the one to which reference has been made as the readiest means to the end. Not that all who follow their example are impelled by the same motives! I should be sorry even to dream it, much less to insinuate or to say it! Some do so out of genuine concern for the faith. But I can only say, for my part, Heaven deliver the Christian faith from such help! *Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes.*

Dr. Hodgson's method is a favourite one with a considerable body of thinkers scattered through Christendom. They believe certain things because, as they say, their "nature prompts and impels them" to do so; the things *find* them. Rational justification of these beliefs is impossible.

My own position is essentially that of Jacobi. I believe that as we are endowed with a sensitivity through which the material world finds access to the mind, so are we endowed with a sensitivity through which the invisible sphere, especially God, finds access to the mind. There is this difference, indeed, between the sensitivity of the inner man and that



of the outward man, to wit, that whereas the latter is normally differentiated into five or six so-called senses or organs of sense, the former is ordinarily undifferentiated, or, at all events, the differentiation, if it exists, is ordinarily latent or merely potential, ordinarily slumbers, so to speak. I say *ordinarily*, for any one who accepts the facts bearing on this subject recorded in the Bible alone, not to mention similar facts reported elsewhere, *as facts*, must allow that the human mind is capable of the intermittent *exercise* of, at least, vision and hearing in relation to the invisible sphere and its inhabitants. Jacobi recognises a twofold capability of perception. As the material world reveals itself to us through the organs of sense, or in sense-perception, so the supersensuous, the infinite world, through the "reason." As we perceive the outward world by eye, ear, and the other senses, so have we an eye and ear for the invisible and divine,—we perceive them by our "reason." In the one case as truly as in the other there is perception. In neither case do we merely take for granted, whether with or without full assurance, for some occult reason or other—say, the *prompting and impulsion of our nature*—that there is a reality outside us acting on sense, and through sense on mind.

In both cases, however, Jacobi held that perception—perception by sense no less than perception by reason—is accompanied by an immediate certainty of the trustworthiness of perception and its report, and to *this immediate certainty* he gives the name *Faith*. As all knowledge begins with perception, and as perception without this immediate certainty or faith would be useless, it may justly be said that all knowledge is grounded on faith—knowledge of the material world no less than knowledge of the invisible world.<sup>1</sup> Jacobi agrees, how-

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Hodgson quotes Jacobi as though he had taken his own view of faith: "'In the last resort, all knowledge depends upon faith,' said Jacobi." Yes, in the sense above explained. But Jacobi does not conceive of "faith" as our human mode of *knowing* or being *assured* of the divine, whilst perception is our human mode of becoming acquainted with the material world. Faith is not a *source* or *channel* of knowledge, whether real or imagined; but merely a necessary

ever, with the school of thinkers whose view I have been opposing, in the opinion that science in the strict sense of the term is possible solely with regard to the objects or world perceived by sense; and denies that the world revealed by reason can ever be treated scientifically. Herein I part company with him. Why the human mind should be less competent to build up a science out of "*reason*"-perceptions than out of sense-perceptions does not quite appear. The science of the invisible and divine may not now be so full, rich, and varied as the sciences of the visible and material; but the science may for all that be none the less truly a science. If "*reason*"-perceptions do not exist, a science of the invisible and divine can only be a science of self-persuasions or delusions; but if they exist, what is to hinder the understanding that rears sciences out of sense-perceptions from rearing a science out of reason-perceptions? Those who deny the possibility appeal, of course, to the diversities, not to say contradictions, between the theological systems that have resulted from the effort to accomplish the task in question, even within Christendom, not to mention the non-Christian religious world. But even allowing, for the sake of argument, that the disagreement noted is as radical as is asserted,—which I, for my part, question,—one might retort: How long is it since sciences of the kind now recognised as such were reared out of sense-perceptions? And may we not hope that when the reason-perceptions and the world they reveal are observed, classified, correlated, investigated with the thoroughness, care, and candour that are expended on sense-perceptions and the world they reveal, a science will arise that shall not be treated as Cinderella by its sisters, but be cheerfully crowned queen of the family.

concomitant of the action of both the channels by which we acquire knowledge of what is external to us,—the channel of sense no less than that of "*reason*."

At one period, indeed, Jacobi used the word *faith* to signify what he afterwards designated *reason*; but even then *faith* meant to him an *organ*, not a *state* of persuadedness;—possibly both conjoined, though certainly the former primarily.

The view of the constitution of the human mind thus briefly stated is imperatively demanded by an immense body of facts. Those, indeed, which imply the existence of a latent differentiation of sensitivity to the invisible world capable of being evoked into action under special conditions are relatively few, though they are probably not confined to Biblical times. But the facts which are inexplicable, save on the assumption of what I would term an undifferentiated sensitivity to the invisible, especially to the divine, are well-nigh innumerable. I refer here to specifically religious experiences—experiences of “irruptions” from the higher sphere; experiences of answers to prayers for light and energy; experiences of the diffusion of inward calm, satisfaction and peace; experiences of victory over self and sin; experiences of forgiveness and reconciliation with God—in short, all that constitutes the truly spiritual life, all through all climes and ages, wherever souls have loyally yearned to be true to the truest and highest they saw and believed. With one accord these experiences have been naively assumed to be like all other healthy experiences, the resultant of the meeting and co-operation of subject with object—in this case of the human subject with invisible or divine objects.

If they were either subjective fancies or sensuous experiences adulterated by the imagination, in other words, illusions or delusions, then the theory I have stated would not be needed. But with what right are they thus characterized? Is it because the men who regard them thus have never shared them? *Sometimes.* Sometimes also because certain phases of mere feeling or emotion are confounded with experiences of which feeling or emotion is but an accompaniment or consequent. But Christian thinkers are bound to protest against misrepresentations of what is deepest, truest, most precious, and above all *healthiest* in their life, as a presumption and impertinence; and the effort to prevent these experiences from even putting in an appearance in court, by means of

a theory of cognition that either ignores or denies them, must be strenuously denounced as both unscientific and uncandid.

At this point, however, systematic theologians are faced with an objection which seems insuperable. Your method, we are told, never has been, is not now, and from the nature of the case cannot be, *scientific*. Even if the reality of reason-perceptions or of the experiences which have been referred to were conceded, no system can be reared up out of them which will stand the test of examination unless the method pursued be *scientific*. I, for my part, cordially indorse this statement. There may be fanciful combinations of even real facts—combinations, too, that shall seem very systematic, be very attractive, and have their uses—without scientific method; but there can be no science.

This question of method, however, is not to be settled so off-hand as many seem to imagine. It is common, both for the unscientific and quasi-scientific of this day, to speak as if there were but one scientific method by which the body of knowledge called science is built up. The real experts know, of course, that this is not the case, but their modes of speech unintentionally foster a mistake among the less knowing which they themselves do not entertain. Now, there is no such thing as one unvarying scientific method, unless by scientific method be understood careful, thorough, and unbiassed observation, experiment, and reasoning. If the various sciences be examined, we shall find that their methods differ very widely within the limit just drawn. There are, for example, the sciences which legitimately restrict themselves to the bare observation and classification of the phenomena of given domains; there are, again, those which employ experiment in addition to observation and classification. Still further, there are the sciences to which mathematics are necessary; and finally, there is the science of pure mathematics. Besides these we have the science of history, as it is coming to be called; economic

science, social science, psychology, and logic; the science of ethics; and that newest of all claimants to the name and rank, the science of religions. Where is the unity of method? In point of fact, each of these sciences has a method more or less peculiar to itself. This, too, is as it should be; for if there is one condition on which more than another scientific progress depends, it is that each domain of phenomena prescribe its own method; that the investigator approach it in the spirit of a child asking to be instructed by itself in its how and why; and so far as he may need artificial means for discovering the how and why, adapting those means most scrupulously to the particular sphere.

What we theologians ask is that these principles be recognised in dealing with our subject-matter. We maintain, as I have already stated, that we have an immense body of phenomena or experiences to investigate; that these phenomena are not only real,—for even delusions are in a sense real,—but as to the incomparably larger part of them healthy; that they are not too impalpable, fleeting, indeterminate, variable, inconstant, to escape observation; that their appearance and disappearance are subject to ascertainable conditions and laws; that they may, within limits that are perfectly intelligible, be even made matter of experiment and so forth: we maintain, therefore, that it is not out of place to endeavour to build up a science out of them; and we demand that the method pursued in building up this science be in full accord with the subject-matter. We do not deny, nay, we are quite aware—all theologians worthy of the name are aware—that the efforts hitherto put forth to build up such a science of Systematic Theology, or, as it might be termed, of Christianity or of the Christian religion, have been only very partially successful; that there is still much to be done: but we believe that when once the right point of view is found and the right method applied, progress will be as solid and rapid as in any other domain. Even the natural sciences—some of



them at all events—are by no means as yet so surely built up that theology may be treated as though it were the one exception. How many revolutionary changes have befallen geology! And has it even now as to some prominent problems arrived at a position of stable equilibrium? What about the process of disintegration which has begun to affect, if not Darwinism as a whole, yet certainly some important features of the system? The fact is, though perhaps *Systematic Theology*—at all events in Britain—may not have made the progress that is desirable; the *disciplinæ*, which may be said to condition its progress, have made advances during the present century which, for variety, fulness, and depth, will well bear comparison with the advances made by other sciences. But even Systematic Theology, taking Christendom as a whole, has progressed far more than most of its “scientific” critics seem at all to be aware. When they undertake their favourite amusement of pointing out its faults and defects, they are in the habit of selecting the weakest and most antiquated specimens. Nor can one greatly blame them, when one remembers how far many of its representatives still are from that accurate, discriminating acquaintance with the general history of Systematic Theology which is the essential condition of forming an intelligent and reasoned opinion. There are few things even in the history of the natural sciences more remarkable than the development, at once amazingly varied and thorough, through which this science has passed, in Germany, for example, since Schleiermacher opened up a new tract of thought by the publication of his *Reden über die Religion*, and of his *Glaubenslehre*, at the commencement of the present century.

Theology, in particular Systematic Theology, advances therefore no claim for exceptional treatment: but it objects to exceptional treatment—especially exceptional treatment justifying itself by a theory of cognition which reduces *à priori* to illusion what all Christian thinkers have believed to be fact.

I will close these remarks with a quotation from the recently published work of a man who is not likely to be suspected of being unduly prejudiced in favour of Christian experience and theology—the *System of Philosophy* of Professor Wundt of Leipzig.<sup>1</sup> He says, “Every man has the imperative need of reducing the various elements of his thinking and feeling to harmony; and, so far as he sets about this task in a scientific way, he philosophizes, no matter how far his estimate of the value of one element may differ from his estimate of the value of another. Regarded from this point of view, our religious feelings and thoughts have the same claim to be taken into consideration as any other of the contents of consciousness; and all alike form constituent factors of one great *Weltanschauung*, that is, system of philosophy. Philosophy can as little claim to produce or supply the place of religion as to create or remodel a state or a system of laws in accordance with its ideas. Its sole business with religion is to understand it. . . . As jurisprudence mediates between concrete law and philosophy, so theology between religion and philosophy.”<sup>2</sup>

Just so, I would add. Religion has first to exist; then comes theology to classify, correlate, and explain its constituent elements; and, finally, philosophy appears on the scene to correlate theology with all the other sciences, and reduce them and their contents to one vast harmonious *Weltanschauung*. If this be a correct view of the matter, it can scarcely be fair to undertake to determine what are and what are not religious experiences, what is and what is not their explanation, by methods and principles drawn from other and very different “sciences.” If philosophy at any time find it impracticable to establish harmony between theology and its

<sup>1</sup> Wilhelm Wundt, *System der Philosophie*, Leipzig 1889.

<sup>2</sup> Wundt, *l.c.* pp. 6–9, quoted freely. [For my own part, I should most probably give a very different account of the meaning of religion from Professor Wundt. But he recognises it, at all events, as the designation of specific experiences, facts, phenomena.—Tr.]

facts, and any or several of the other sciences and their facts, its business is *not*, as is now the too common fashion, to browbeat theology as the sole offender, but to summon all to give account of themselves by way of ascertaining where the fault really lies. With a fair field and no favour, theology is bound to be content, no matter how the case may end; but it is equally bound to protest against prejudgment.

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I am not a little indebted, and herewith make very grateful acknowledgments, to my friend Mr. G. B. Kidd, B.A., LL.B., of Nottingham, for kindly revising my MS. before I put the last touches to it myself. His knowledge of German and other languages is so accurate, and his acquaintance with ancient and modern philosophy so unusual, that I greatly regret that undue self-distrust prevents him from undertaking work, either original or translation, on his own account. Few — certainly in his circumstances — are so competent. Some notes by him are inserted in the Appendix: they are signed G. B. K. to distinguish them from those of Herr Stählin.

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## ERRATA.

Page	32.	Reference to note 9a wanting.
„	32.	Reference to note 9b wanting.
„	48.	<i>For</i> 16 in note <i>read</i> 14.
„	83.	Reference to note 22 lacking.
„	153.	<i>For</i> 33 in note <i>read</i> 42.
„	218.	Reference to note 46a wanting.



## INTRODUCTION.

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WERE the question to be asked—What German Protestant divine of the present day has been most successful in securing adherents, and forming a school? there could be no hesitation about an answer among those who are acquainted with the position of matters in Germany. No German theologian has a larger following than *Albrecht Ritschl*. In mentioning his name, we mention the head of a theological school second to none either in numbers or in influence. Not a few of his former pupils occupy theological chairs at the universities; and a large number of the clergy engaged in practical work may be reckoned among his followers. In the *Theologische Literaturzeitung* (*Journal of Theological Literature*) this school has created an organ which exercises censorship over the theological literature of the present day, and carries on a propaganda for the new theological principles which it represents.<sup>1</sup> It is the Göttingen school at the head of which Ritschl's name stands. In the sphere of *Systematic Theology* this school has effected a revolution that has been received with scarcely less acclamation than that which, more than a generation ago, hailed the theories that emanated from Tübingen. Then, it was certain theorems of the Hegelian Philosophy which, with the aid of historical criticism, were

<sup>1</sup> For illustrations of the manner in which this censorship is exercised, see Zöckler's pamphlet in defence of the school to which he belongs, entitled, *Wider die unfehlbare Wissenschaft* (*Against Infallible Science*), Nördlingen 1887.

applied for the explanation of the rise of Christianity and the origin of the New Testament literature; *now*, it is modern empiricism and Neo-Kantism, the avowed antagonist of all speculative philosophy, which is striving to gain the upper hand of theology, and to remodel Christian Dogmatics according to its principles. The new ideas thus started in connection with Dogmatics are being applied to other branches of theology. Ritschl, moreover, as Wellhausen himself tells us, gave a direct personal impulse to the formation and development of the new school of Old Testament Criticism.<sup>1</sup>

The fact that Ritschl's theology has so rapidly made way and gained a position of such commanding authority, may be regarded as a sign that it is not simply an arbitrary product of its author's brain, but is borne up on vigorous tendencies of the age, and is deeply rooted in the religious and theological consciousness of the present day. But the breadth of a stream of thought affords no proof that it is flowing either in a true or advantageous direction. Meanwhile, altogether divergent answers are being given to the question whether the channel into which Ritschl has directed theology is the right one or a very wrong one.<sup>2</sup> Some maintain that his system is a development and improvement in thorough harmony with, and inspired by, the genuine spirit of primitive Christianity; that he has, so to speak, brought theology to its right mind; nay more, as respects his doctrine of the Church, he is actually reckoned among "Dogmatic theologians of the positive confessional type;" and that, too, by a Lutheran divine "who looks to the ideas current among the Lutheran Reformers for the guiding momenta of the conception of the

<sup>1</sup> See Note 1 in Appendix.

<sup>2</sup> Quite an extensive Ritschl-literature has grown up during the last decennium in the shape of pamphlets and larger books, both for and against his views; not to mention references in books of a more general character. A list of the more important will be found in the Appendix, Note 2.

Since this criticism by Herr Stählin appeared, Ritschl has ceased from his earthly labours, and has gone, as we may well believe, where men "see not as in a glass darkly, but face to face; and know even as also they are known."

Church.”<sup>1</sup> Others, on the contrary, assert that Ritschl's theology is irreconcilably opposed alike to the teachings of Scripture and those of the Church.

As opinions differ thus completely with regard to Ritschl, it is clear that the subject needs further discussion. So much has indeed been written and spoken on it, that it might be supposed all had been said that can be said; that the opposite points of view had by this time found adequate expression; and that nothing new could remain to be advanced. There is still, however, need for a fresh inquiry. After all that has been said, there still remains one point which, in its bearings on Ritschl's system, has not received the attention which it merits. He himself has declared that the specific character of his theology is due to a *theory of cognition* which his opponents have not properly considered; and has thus himself laid his finger on the point from which any attempts to arrive at a proper estimate of his position and views must proceed. The psychological presuppositions of his theology, more specifically those which bear on the problem of knowledge, need to be tested; and the task which Ritschl himself has set his critics is, to show not only how the principles in question have determined his system, but also what influence the theory of knowledge with which he starts necessarily exercises on (Systematic) theology in general.

In undertaking this task, we have no intention of instituting a comparison between Ritschl's system and the Confessions of the Church; we are concerned rather with its scientific character, so far as it is determined by a definite theory of cognition; in other words, our aim will be critically to estimate the relation in which it stands to its own premises, that is, to the theory of knowledge on which it is based. Hitherto criticism of Ritschl's system has related chiefly to its substance—to its contents; the inquiry we propose to

<sup>1</sup> See R. Seeberg, *Der Begriff der christlichen Kirche*, 1 Theil. *Studien zur Geschichte des Begriffs der Kirche*, § 28; cf. p. vi.

ourselves is methodological—it will relate to that view of the form and process of human cognition which has determined the character of Ritschl's theology. We shall not, of course, leave the contents altogether unnoticed; but they will be considered from the point of view here formulated. This constitutes alike the need and the justification of the following pages.

Thus, too, are the limits of our task defined. We have no intention of examining Ritschl's views of the Church or of the History of Doctrine; nor his exegetical positions—the use he makes, for example, of the Old and New Testament; not even what he considers to be taught or not taught in the Scriptures. Our inquiry will relate solely to his System of Theology as set forth in his principal work;<sup>1</sup> it will be conducted, too, in the light of his theory of cognition. The theory in question is expounded partly in the work just referred to and partly in a smaller treatise, entitled, *Theologie und Metaphysik*.<sup>2</sup> As a source of his theological views, reference may also be made to the *Unterricht in der christlichen Religion*.<sup>3</sup>

As regards his theory of knowledge, however, Ritschl is a disciple—an independent disciple he would, of course, claim to be—of the philosophy of Kant and of Lotze. We must commence, therefore, with an investigation of these two systems; at the same time we shall not overlook the fact that the Neo-Kantism of the present day presents itself as a fuller development, and more exact expression, of the philosophy of Kant. We must therefore endeavour to make clear to ourselves the significance and scope of the epistemological problems alluded to in connection with the philosophy

<sup>1</sup> The work in question is *Die christliche Lehre von der Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, 3 vols., Bonn, Marcus, 1870-1874; 2nd ed. 1882-1883. A translation of the first volume was published some years ago.

<sup>2</sup> Published at Bonn 1881.

<sup>3</sup> *Instruction in the Christian Religion*, 2nd ed. Bonn 1881, intended for students and higher schools.

of Kant, alike in its original and revived forms on the one hand, and with that of Lotze on the other, before going on to pronounce an opinion on Ritschl's own theory of cognition, and to expose the consequences which it involves alike for his own theology and for theology generally.

The lines to be followed by the following discussion are thus drawn beforehand.

## PART FIRST.

### THE KANTIAN PHILOSOPHY AND ITS REVIVAL AT THE PRESENT DAY.

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“It is a sore misery that man should become so blind as not to know what God is, seeing that he lives in God ; yet there are actually men who forbid us inquiring what God is, though they profess to be teachers of God.”—J. BÖHME, *Von der Menschwerdung Jesu Christi*, 1 Theil 5. 27.

“The understanding which is averted from the divine, does not on that account become more clear-sighted as regards that which is non-divine, but only more irrational. Separated from Unity, it loses the very power to unite and truly to understand ; and instead of simply distinguishing in order to unify, and unifying in order to distinguish, all it can do is in separating to confound, and in confounding to separate.”—FR. BAADER, *Philos. Schriften und Aufsätze*, 2 Bd. p. 43.

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### SECTION FIRST.

#### THE KANTIAN PHILOSOPHY.

KANT is the Reformer, or rather the “Instaurator,” of modern philosophy, the inaugurator of a new epoch in the history of philosophy. With him began a crisis in philosophical thought which has not yet reached a definite conclusion, a movement which has not yet come to rest. As he himself tells us, in the well-known letter of February 21, 1772, addressed to Marcus Herz, he had been awakened out of his dogmatic slumber by Hume. But whilst Dogmatism laid down posi-

tions which it could not establish, the scepticism of Hume, on the other hand, necessarily involved the complete extinction of knowledge. Kant's aim, therefore, was to vindicate the objectivity of human knowledge in opposition to the scepticism of Hume. This he deemed possible only in one way, namely, by showing that that which gives objective validity and necessity to our knowledge of things is to be found, not in the things themselves, but in the human mind itself. He accordingly undertook a critical examination of the cognitive faculty, with a view to establishing on a firm basis the objective truth of our knowledge, at the same time determining its limits. In this way he hoped both to put an end to the dogmatism of popular philosophy and to transform the merely negative results of scepticism into something positive.

The philosophy of Kant was therefore in the first instance a theory of cognition. His theory of knowledge is the necessary basis and presupposition of the views regarding ethics and the philosophy of religion which he expounded. A presentation and criticism of the Kantian philosophy will therefore be first and foremost a presentation and criticism of the Kantian theory of knowledge as set forth in the *Critique of Pure Reason* and in the *Prolegomena to all future Metaphysics*.

## CHAPTER I.

### KANT'S THEORY OF COGNITION.

#### § 1. *Kant distinguishes between what our cognitive faculties supply and what is supplied to them.*

Kant has taught us to distinguish, in regard to everything that becomes an object of knowledge, between that which our cognitive faculty brings with it and that in the object which



exists independently of our knowledge of it. Now our cognitive faculty has, so to speak, two branches or stems—one, that of sense, or the capacity of receiving impressions from objects; the *other*, the understanding, or the capacity of forming concepts. Objects are presented to us through sense; they are thought by the understanding.<sup>1</sup> The contribution made *à priori* by sense to acts of knowledge consists in the forms of the outward and inward sense, namely, space and time.<sup>2</sup> The concepts, by means of which the understanding thinks the objects perceived by—*i.e.* supplied through—sense, are the categories, for example, unity, plurality, causality, substantiality. The categories, therefore, are nothing but forms through which our understanding thinks objects, *i.e.* they are, so to speak, moulds into which it casts them; even as space and time are nothing but forms in which sense views or intuits<sup>3</sup> things; which forms belong not to the things as such, but solely to our faculties of perception and conception; yet so necessarily and universally, that nothing whatever can become an object of knowledge without having been *ipso facto* already subjected to these forms of thought and sense. When, on the other hand, we take away from objects all that is due to the constitution of our cognitive faculty, and ask what the things known are in and by themselves,—*i.e.* without reference to such faculty, or apart from our knowing them,—there remains nothing but an absolutely unknown quantity, a sort of mathematical  $x$ , about which all we can say is, that to it we trace the impression which has been made on our senses. All our knowledge, therefore, is knowledge of appearance, of phenomena, of the phenomenal; what lies beyond appearance or phenomena, to wit, the *thing in itself*, never becomes an object of human knowledge. That which becomes the object

<sup>1</sup> See Note 3 in Appendix.

<sup>2</sup> See Note 4 in Appendix.

<sup>3</sup> [*Anschauung* means literally, of course, intuition or onlooking, beholding; but I am inclined to think that its real equivalent in this connection is either sensation or perception. Intuition has been so much used with another though related meaning, that it is confusing to translate *Anschauung* by it.—Tr.]

of our knowledge is never in any case the object as such, but always the object as perceived and thought in the forms and under the conditions necessarily imposed by our mind; that is, it is no longer the thing-in-itself, but the thing as it appears, or as a phenomenon.

But if these presuppositions be valid and binding, how can anything at all become an object of knowledge? How can objects be given for us to know? Kant replies: In the fact that our senses receive impressions from them. The cause of these impressions, therefore, is the thing-in-itself. But how can the thing-in-itself be a cause? Causality is one of the categories of the understanding; and the categories are valid solely and exclusively for objects as they appear, *i.e.* for phenomena. That which lies beyond appearance, that is, beyond the objects given in cognition, cannot be represented as a causality. In the very act of applying this category to it, we remove it out of the class of things in themselves and place it in the class of phenomena. There would accordingly no longer be anything in existence to which that impression could be traced, whereby an object could be given or have existence for sense. Here, then, we have a manifest contradiction. The unknown thing-in-itself, or essence, or  $x$  of the objects of knowledge, inasmuch as it produces the sensuous impressions to which the categories of the understanding are afterwards applied, naturally precedes those categories; but in the very act of being conceived as a cause, it is subjected to one of the very categories which it precedes. That which is entirely before and outside of our cognitive faculty is, in this way, thought in one of the very forms which are exclusively forms of that cognitive faculty, and are not to be found in things as they are in themselves.

We see, therefore, that Kant is unable to arrive at even the very first of the factors which condition the process of knowledge, namely, what he terms the matter of phenomena, that which is given in perception, and which becomes part of our

knowledge, not as such, that is, not in its original and so to speak crude state, but in so far as the forms of sense (time and space) and those of understanding (the categories) are applied to it—even this primitive and lowest of the elements whose combination constitutes human knowledge he is unable to reach—without at once and beforehand sinning against his own theory. Though it is of the very essence of that theory to restrict knowledge entirely to the phenomenal, and to deny to the human intellect all access to things in themselves, he cannot gain the very entrance or starting-point of his system without affirming something of the thing-in-itself, and to that extent attributing to the human mind a power of knowing the said thing-in-itself.

This objection was urged by the very earliest opponents of the *Critique of Pure Reason*; and Gottlob Ernst Schulze pressed it with special force.<sup>1</sup> Since his day it has frequently been repeated.

On this rock the entire Kantian theory of cognition necessarily splits. For the fault in question is not one that can be corrected; it is of the very essence of the Critical system. It necessarily presupposes this contradiction; it has no existence apart from it; the contradiction forms a part of its foundation and very constitution. Kant could not possibly allow that causality might appertain to the thing-in-itself. For if causality lay there, Hume would have been right in asserting that the idea of causality is a mere product of custom,<sup>2</sup> and in his consequent denial of necessity to human knowledge. In that case the idea of causation forfeits its *à priori* character; whilst if that character, and with it the truth and necessity of human knowledge, are to be saved, causality must lie, not in things in themselves, but solely in our understanding. Kant's point of view admits of no other

<sup>1</sup> *Ænesidemus*. See Note 5 in Appendix.

<sup>2</sup> David Hume, *Eine Untersuchung in Betreff des menschlichen Verstandes*. *Philosophische Bibliothek* von Kirchmann, Bd. 13, 3rd ed. p. 75 ff.

alternative. But what he thus denies he is compelled at another point to affirm; causality must belong to the thing-in-itself, for it is that which produces the impressions by which our senses are affected.

Not only is the first of the elements which go to make up our knowledge a contradiction, the entire theory is from beginning to end one *continuous self-contradiction*. Knowledge, we are assured, comes into existence through the application of the forms of perception (*Anschauung* = intuition) and of the understanding to sensation, that is, to the impressions produced by objects on our mental receptivity or receptive faculty; and this is the only way in which we know. The *Critique of Pure Reason* aims at demonstrating that all knowledge is the unity of these three factors. Consequently nothing can be the object of our knowledge which has not issued from the co-operation of these factors—which is not their joint product. An object of knowledge is as such the unity of these moments; it is the combination of the cognitive activity and its *à priori* forms—the forms of sense and of the understanding—with the matter of the phenomenal given in sensation; and yet we are to make this same cognitive activity a subject of investigation—that is, the very instrument of knowledge itself as such, and the mode of its activity. According to the conditions just laid down, this is an impossibility; for knowledge has no existence save as something is given besides the cognitive activity (or faculty) to which the knowledge may relate, namely, the matter of appearance, or, to use Kant's own expression, that which corresponds to sensation.<sup>1</sup> Consequently, the activity which we term knowing, as such and in isolation from that which is given in sensation, cannot become an object of knowledge, and therefore not a subject of investigation; any more than that which is given in sensation can become an object of knowledge by itself. Yet Kant not only

<sup>1</sup> *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, 3rd ed. 1791, p. 34.

separates the unifying functions of consciousness or intellect from sensation, but also isolates sense from the understanding. He himself teaches that nothing becomes an object of human knowledge that is not on the one hand matter of sensation, and on the other hand subjected to the categories of the understanding. Objects are presented to us by sense; they are thought, says he, by the understanding and its concepts.<sup>1</sup> There is no knowledge where these two moments are not conjoined; for concepts without perceptions are empty, perceptions without concepts are blind.<sup>2</sup> All knowledge is a combination of the two elements. It is impossible, therefore, that either of the two should become a subject of investigation in isolation from the other—either sensuous perception as such, or the understanding with its categories as such and alone.<sup>3</sup>

Consequently the *Critique of Pure Reason* undertakes a task which the same *Critique of Pure Reason* demonstrates to be an impossibility.

“Neither concepts without perceptions which in some way correspond to them, nor perceptions without concepts, can constitute knowledge.” “Only when they unite can knowledge result.”<sup>4</sup> In other words, neither sense nor understanding by itself can become an object of knowledge. Sense, as the capacity of receiving impressions, supplies, it is true, sensuous perceptions; but the faculty itself is never found in a sensuous perception, for it alone renders sensuous perception possible. Whatever Kant, therefore, posits regarding this faculty, lacks that without which, according to him, knowledge is impossible, namely, sensuous perception. Equally impossible is it for the categories to become an object of sensuous perception, seeing that they are the exclusive product of the understanding, which is destitute of perceptions. Still further, the understanding and its concepts can only

<sup>1</sup> *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, p. 33.

<sup>2</sup> See Note 6 in Appendix.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 75.

<sup>4</sup> *Kritik*, etc., p. 74 f.

become a subject of investigation by the application to them of conceptions of the understanding; yet these said conceptions, it is maintained, can only be applied to that which is given in sensuous perception. So that not only is there no sensuous perception, but there is equally a lack of concepts of such a nature that concepts could be thought by their means. In all these directions, therefore, Kant's theory of cognition involves itself in contradictions, which clearly prove its own impossibility.

The propositions which form the contents of the Transcendental Æsthetic and Logic are merely pretended, not actual knowledge. As these transcendently æsthetic and logical objects are merely constituent elements and presuppositions of objects of cognition, they themselves by themselves can never become objects of knowledge; when, therefore, the *Critique of Pure Reason* undertakes to formulate a theory of cognition which shall throw light on the process of knowledge, it really lands us in the conclusion that the question what knowledge is can never be answered, inasmuch as the elements which constitute knowledge cannot be made a subject of examination.

But as the elements of knowledge cannot be separated, and if they were separated could not be made matter of investigation, so neither can they be recombined after they have once been parted. Kant represents this conjunction (*conjunctio*) as effected through the medium of the "Transcendental Schema," which is a sort of *tertium quid* between the Intellect and Sense, rendering possible the application of the categories to sensuous perception.<sup>1</sup> But then he also informs us, that pure concepts of the Understanding and empirical perceptions are "quite heterogeneous." Yet if they are totally heterogeneous, how can there be any *tertium quid* which is homogeneous with both, that is, an

<sup>1</sup> *Kritik der reinen Vernunft. Transcendentale Analytik*, Buch ii. Hauptstück i. *Schematismus der reinen Verstandesbegriffe*, p. 176 ff.



intellectual something which is not intellectual and a sensuous something which is not sensuous,—a something, in other words, which is both the one and the other, and yet neither the one nor the other? If this third something is homogeneous with both, they cannot be heterogeneous to each other. On this supposition alone is a combination of the two conceivable. But as Kant starts with the assumption of their total heterogeneity, the “Transcendental Schema” is an unthinkable idea; and understanding and sense, once separated, cannot again enter into union with each other. Thus Kant’s theory of cognition, tried by its own principles, is found to be an inherent impossibility and a perpetual self-contradiction.

§ 2. *Supposing Kant’s procedure valid, what would result?*

Not only is Kant’s procedure continuously self-contradictory; but even if we should concede its self-consistence, the issue would be unsatisfactory. What does it accomplish? Certainly not that which it is designed to accomplish. The author’s intention was to establish the reality of our knowledge in opposition to the scepticism of Hume; dogmatism having proved itself, in his view, untenable. But what he meant to be a rescue, turns out to be rather an entire *overthrow of the knowledge of objective truth*. For the method which he follows tends to show that what we know is merely the phenomenal appearance—not the truth, not the thing-in-itself.

But, now, what is the *phenomenal*? It consists, in the first place, of a *matter*, namely, the sensation;<sup>1</sup> in other words, the impression which the thing-in-itself makes on our sensibility or sensitive faculty. In the next place, it consists of the *form*, that is, the form of sensuous intuition or perception, namely, space and time. This form “lies ready *à priori* in the mind;”<sup>2</sup> it belongs exclusively to our sensibility, that is, to

<sup>1</sup> *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, pp. 34, 207, 209.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 34.



our capacity of receiving impressions. But the real stuff of phenomenon, its matter, namely, sensation, is also something subjective.<sup>1</sup> Consequently, the phenomenal exists alike as to form and content solely in the mind, and is simply a subjective representative. Phenomenon, in the Kantian sense, is not *objective*, but *subjective phenomenon*, that is, it is not a manifestation of the thing-in-itself; it is not a coming to light or coming forward of the thing itself, but purely a mode in which we represent things, an affection of our sensibility, a modification of our consciousness, which reveals nothing whatever of the nature of the thing as it is in itself.

How then do we come to pass beyond this subjective reality as a modification of our consciousness, and to attribute to it an objective reality? To this question Kant replies: Our representations acquire objective significance when phenomena are subsumed under the necessary forms of all thought, namely, the categories. Objective force is acquired by these ideas or representations of ours, in that they are necessarily combined in a certain way and are subjected to a rule.<sup>2</sup> In other words, they owe their objectivity to their being combined according to law: this gives them their universal validity.

And so the matter and content of all knowledge, namely, sensation, is a subjective idea or representation. But even the categories which are supposed to form a contrast thereto, and to confer objective reality on our knowledge, these, too, are merely a subjective something; for they are to be found solely in our understanding, not in the things themselves. Our knowledge therefore is composed, as Kant puts it, of elements or constituents which appertain solely to the subject. On the one hand, I find in myself an affection of my sensibility, namely, a sensation; on the other, I actively think with the forms which confer on the contents of sensation the

<sup>1</sup> *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, p. 207.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 242.

dignity of the universally valid.<sup>1</sup> It is therefore subjective appearance, and that alone, which is known and determined. Objective knowledge, a knowledge of anything that has actuality outside and independently of our consciousness—there is not. All our knowledge is knowledge of our own ideas or representations. The human mind knows nothing but the determinations of its own nature; and the entire process of knowledge is a movement in which neither the mind goes outside of itself, nor does anything enter into the mind which was outside of it and did not already form part of itself. This being the case, human knowledge loses all meaning and importance; it has no sort of contact with real things; it stands altogether isolated alongside and outside of objective truth; consciousness is shut up in its own subjectivity, within the phenomenal world which it carries within itself, and outside, beyond its reach, lies the world of reality.

We know, says Kant, nothing but our mode of perceiving objects. "Even if we were to carry our empirical intuition or perception to the highest degree of clearness, we should not thereby approach any nearer to a knowledge of the constitution of objects considered in themselves. For at the best we should only arrive at a complete knowledge of our own mode of intuition or perception, that is, of our sensibility; and this, moreover, solely under the conditions originally attaching to our sensibility, namely, the conditions of time and space. What the objects may be, considered in themselves, would never become known to us, even though we should attain to the clearest possible acquaintance with that which is alone within our reach, namely, their appearance." "The representation of a body in perception contains nothing at all that could belong to an object considered in itself."<sup>2</sup> As soon as we withdraw in thought our subjective constitution, the object we represent to ourselves, with all the qualities

<sup>1</sup> Hegel, *Geschichte der Philosophie*, 3 Th. p. 573.

<sup>2</sup> *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, p. 59.

attached to it by sensuous perception, disappears—is nowhere to be found.

The objective truth of knowledge is thus completely surrendered; it is resolved into mere seeming. Appearance, in the Kantian sense, says Baader justly, is not a manifestation of the nature or essence of things, but “deceptive, subjective show.” Kant may contend or prove that this subjective show necessarily results from the constitution of our cognitive faculty; but because this show is necessary and universal, it does not therefore follow that it is objective knowledge. All that follows is that nobody can escape this deceptive show. It does not cease to be mere seeming, and therefore delusion, because it is necessary and universal. It pretends to be the thing itself, and yet it belongs exclusively to the mind, and is nothing apart from the constitution of the cognitive faculty. Nay more, not even an inference as to the nature of things in themselves is admissible; for any such inference would merely be the expression of an idea or representation of our own, and would not carry us in the slightest degree beyond our own consciousness. The very word “is,” as the copula in a judgment,<sup>1</sup> is thus pronounced to be a lie; all that we have a right to say is, “it appears.” And when the Psalmist magnifies the works of God, we ought, according to Kant’s theory, to say, “It is but slight honour that he thus pays to God; for in reality he praises Him for things which are only the figments of our own consciousness.”

### § 3. *The next problem is the origin of sensation.*

But the consequences of Kant’s positions are more far-reaching still. The real stuff of all knowledge is sensation—the matter of all phenomena; sensation becomes phenomenon in that it is intuited under the *à priori* forms of sense or the

<sup>1</sup> See Note 7 in Appendix.

sensibility; and to the phenomena thus arising, the forms of the understanding—the categories—are then applied. Sensation is therefore the given content of all phenomena. Without sensation there would be no phenomena, and the conceptions of the understanding would be empty. *But whence arises sensation?* Where does it come from? Kant lays down as a fundamental principle that sensation, regarded as an affection of our sensibility, is caused by the thing-in-itself. But what right has he to assert this? How can I know anything at all about things in themselves, seeing that knowledge relates solely to phenomena? How is it possible, then, for me to know that the sensuous affection which constitutes the real element in phenomena is caused by things in themselves? That can plainly never be learnt from experience, for experience itself only arises when given phenomena are subsumed under the categories of the understanding. The thing-in-itself, therefore, lies beyond all experience. Whatever is not a phenomenon can never become an object of experience. It is impossible, consequently, to discover from experience whether there are or are not things in themselves existing outside and independently of our consciousness—things, that is, which have reality out of us, not in the empirical, but in the transcendental sense.

But not even the affection of the sensibility which is presumed to be an effect produced by the thing-in-itself can become, as such, an object of experience, inasmuch as it precedes all experience. As far, then, as experience carries us, nothing can be said with regard to the source of the affections of our sensibility—whether they are caused by impressions from without or arise in some way within our own consciousness. But inasmuch as, according to Kant, all real knowledge is restricted to experience, how can it be possible notwithstanding to know that the thing-in-itself exists? In the first edition of the *Critique* he expressed himself quite consistently with regard to this matter. That

alone, said he, can be immediately perceived which is in ourselves. "The existence of an actual object outside of me (using the word, not in its empirical, but in its intellectual sense) can never therefore be given in perception. As something over and above this perception, which is itself but a modification of the inner sense, it can only be added to it in thought, by way of inference, as its external cause."<sup>1</sup> "Properly speaking, therefore," he adds further, "I cannot perceive external things; I can merely infer their existence from my inner perception, by treating this latter as an effect of which something external is the nearest cause. But the conclusion from a given effect to a definite cause is always uncertain; because an effect may have more than one cause. So far, then, as the question of the cause of perception is concerned, it must ever remain uncertain whether it is inward or outward; whether, in other words, our so-called external perceptions are not all of them a mere play of the inner sense, or are really to be referred to the causative action of actual external objects." Even the existence of matter proves nothing against this. A transcendental idealist may "concede the existence of matter without at all passing beyond his self-consciousness. . . . Holding matter, as he does,—yea, even its inner possibility, for mere appearance, which, when separated from our sensibility, is nothing, he considers it to be simply a species of representations (intuition) which we term external, not as though they referred to objects which in themselves are external, but because the perceptions are related to space in which all things seem outside each other, though itself, that is, space, is really in us." "One might indeed allow that something which in the transcendental sense may be outside of us, is the cause of our intuitions; but this cannot be any of the objects which we refer to when we represent to ourselves matter and corporeal things; for

<sup>1</sup> See p. 367 of the 1st ed. Cf. Benno Erdmann's edition of the *Kritik* published in 1878, where the original paging is given. See p. 625 f.

these latter are nothing but phenomena, that is, mere kinds of representation, which are to be found nowhere save in ourselves, and whose reality rests as much on immediate consciousness as does the consciousness of our own thoughts. The transcendental object is alike unknown, whether regard be had to inner or outer intuition."<sup>1</sup>

Such being the position of matters, it must be left a moot point whether the thing-in-itself exist or not. In the second edition of the *Critique*, indeed,—of which the subsequent editions were exact reprints,—Kant endeavoured to forefend this conclusion, especially by means of the addition which has so often been appealed to, entitled, *Refutation of Idealism*.<sup>2</sup> Nor need we follow Schopenhauer's example, and insinuate that he mutilated, disfigured, spoiled his work through senile weakness, or fear of men and cowardice, whilst at the same time pretending that there was no difference between the two editions.<sup>3</sup> There is no reason for doubting that he gave expression to his own honest opinion when he declared, in the preface to the second edition,<sup>4</sup> that the changes made were simply improvements in the mode of putting his meaning, intended to clear up certain obscurities, and to correct certain misunderstandings which those obscurities had caused. But even Fr. H. Jacobi pronounced the difference between the two editions to be materially very important, and took the first edition alone as the basis of his criticism of transcendental idealism.<sup>5</sup> More recently, Kuno Fischer, in particular, has been at special pains to set forth Kant's critical views in their original and genuine form, that is, in the form in which they were expounded in the first edition of his great work. In his judgment the later editions thrust the idealistic doctrine

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 367–372 of the original paging of the first edition as given in Benno Erdmann's edition of Kant's *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, Leipzig, Voss, 1878. *Beilagen aus der ersten Auflage*, p. 625 f. Comp. Erdmann, pp. 625–628.

<sup>2</sup> *Kritik*, etc. *Transcendentale Analytik*, Buch ii. Hauptstück ii. p. 274 ff.

<sup>3</sup> Note 8 in Appendix.

<sup>4</sup> *L.c.* p. 38.

<sup>5</sup> Fr. H. Jacobi, *Werke*, 2 Bd. p. 291 ff.



with which, "strictly understood," the *Critique* itself "stands or falls" into the background, blunt its edge, intentionally discard the unambiguous and uncompromising terms which excluded all possible doubt, and even favour a view which is not only markedly contradictory, but even, in certain points, wears the appearance of a spurious interpolation. He himself thinks that Kant's aim was thus to render his theory in a certain respect popular and exoteric: "All that the external, the exoteric, that is, the dogmatic mind, demanded as the condition of its acceptance of the Kantian philosophy, was the single little concession that phenomena are, after all, something over and above mere ideas or representations—not much, but something which might be posited for the mind's own satisfaction, and whose character as an unknowable *x* might be excused by referring to the happy discovery of the limits of the human understanding. Having made this concession, Kant became, what otherwise would scarcely have been possible, the head of a numerous school. The *Critique* in its first form was the *Critique* from *Kant's own point of view*; in its subsequent forms it was the *Critique* from the *point of view of Kantians*."<sup>1</sup> "The original and genuine form of his work was veiled by Kant himself in the later editions, and thus surrendered as a prey to the false conceptions by means of which his doctrine became the current and convenient philosophy of the schools."<sup>2</sup> The point here touched upon is treated in the same way by Rosenkranz,<sup>3</sup> as also by Joh. Ed. Erdmann.<sup>4</sup> The opposite view is taken by Cohen, as also by Ueberweg, Zeller, and Riehl. Benno Erdmann has made the question the subject

<sup>1</sup> Kuno Fischer, *Geschichte der neueren Philosophie*, Bd. iii., Mannheim 1860, p. 444 f.

<sup>2</sup> Kuno Fischer, *Vorrede zur Geschichte*, etc., p. xiv. See also Note 9 in Appendix.

<sup>3</sup> Kant's *Sämmtliche Werke*, herausgegeben von Rosenkranz und Schubert, 2 Theil, Vorrede, p. viii. f.

<sup>4</sup> See Erdmann's *Histories of Philosophy*.



of a comprehensive historical investigation,<sup>1</sup> and arrives at the following result: that the second edition does actually contain material deviations from the first; that a twist was given to the purely critical tendency of his original inquiries out of regard for dogmatism; and that Kant introduced realistic modifications into his original view, because he found that even in the first edition his critical results were irreconcilably at variance with the naïve realistic presuppositions regarding the existence of things in themselves and of the ego in itself, with which he started. This transformation of his view—and it was a complete one—has, however, been judged and condemned by history; nor did it check the idealistic development of his doctrine, which, beginning with the surrender of the thing-in-itself, ended in exalting the transcendental ego into the absolute.<sup>2</sup>

The incompatibility of the realistic transformation of his doctrine, which Kant thus attempted, with his own fundamental ideas—ideas which he never gave up—is made especially clear by the section of the *Refutation of Idealism*, directed against Berkeley, which he inserted in the second edition of the *Critique*.<sup>3</sup> He there lays down and endeavours to establish the proposition, that “the simple but empirically determined consciousness of my own existence proves the existence of objects in space outside of me.”<sup>4</sup> As though space in the Kantian sense existed anywhere but in the mind itself, and as though, for that very reason, what is intuited in space could possibly be anything more than subjective representation. When he further argues that “determinations of my existence in time are only possible on the supposition of the existence of actual things which I perceive

<sup>1</sup> Kant's *Kriticismus in der ersten und in der zweiten Auflage der Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, Leipzig 1878. See pp. 239 f., 244.

<sup>2</sup> [So J. G. Fichte. —Tr.]

<sup>3</sup> *Postulate des empirischen Denkens überhaupt* (Erdmann, p. 197), Buch ii. Hauptst. ii. Abschn. 4.

<sup>4</sup> *Kritik*, etc. (Erdmann), p. 202.

outside of myself," what can these same actual things be which I perceive outside myself but phenomena, that is, subjective representations? "This," remarks Kuno Fischer, "is no refutation of Berkeley, but simply a flat denial of idealism, in making which he strangely enough gives up his own position."<sup>1</sup> We cannot regard this surrender as inexplicable. Kant never had the intention of falling into complete idealism; but in endeavouring to escape from it, he contradicts the elementary principles of his own system which he had never renounced.

§ 4. *The position of doubt with regard to the thing-in-itself thus reached untenable.*

Despite his refutation of idealism, therefore, and notwithstanding all the other modifications of his original position contained in the second edition of the *Critique*, Kant is compelled to leave it doubtful whether things in themselves really exist or not. But the matter cannot rest there. It is impossible to halt at a doubt like this. He tells us that we can only arrive at things outside of us by means of inference from our inner perceptions; and that all such inference is, to say the least, uncertain. Just so Berkeley, too, believed that the existence of external objects can only be inferred from that which is matter of immediate sensuous perception. But then Berkeley goes on to ask, "What conclusion can determine us to assume the existence of bodies outside the mind, on the ground of that which we perceive, seeing that not even the advocates of the doctrine of matter maintain that there is any necessary connection between bodies and our ideas?"<sup>2</sup> In like manner, the point of view of Kant necessarily gives rise to the question, How can that which is given in perception

<sup>1</sup> *Geschichte der neueren Philosophie*, 3 Bd. 1860, p. 397; cf. 3rd revised edition, p. 406 f.

<sup>2</sup> Berkeley's *Abhandlung über die Principien der menschlichen Erkenntniss*. *Philos. Bibliothek von J. H. v. Kirchmann*, 12 Bd. 2 ed. Leipzig 1879, p. 30.

warrant an inference to that which has no relation whatever to our perceptions and knowledge? We know only phenomena. But phenomenon and the thing-in-itself are not so related to each other that the latter is contained in the former as its hidden *x*; that, in other words, the two are one and the same object regarded from different points of view,—now as phenomenon, then as the thing-in-itself; that, consequently, the thing-in-itself is neither more nor less than the phenomenon stripped of its sensuous husk or representation. On the contrary, phenomenon thus stripped of its sensuous dress is *nothing, nothing at all*; and the thing-in-itself is the thought of an object totally different from that which is contained in the phenomenon.<sup>1</sup> But if the two have nothing to do with each other, how can any conclusion be drawn from sensuous representations to things in themselves? Were such an inference possible, it must also be possible to infer not only their bare existence, but also something as to their nature and constitution. Something or other of the qualities of things in themselves must be present in and work its way out through the sensuous impression, which constitutes the real material of all phenomena. But this Kant expressly denies; indeed, he could not do otherwise than deny it. His *Critique* completely severed all connection between phenomenon and thing-in-itself. Inference from a given object to one that is not given is only possible or conceivable if there is some sort of connection between them. But when every sort of connection between phenomenon and the thing-in-itself is denied, how can the existence of the one be inferred from that of the other? It is not even admissible to affirm that the thing-in-itself produces an impression on our sensibility; for in that case there would of necessity be made known to me, through the impression received, not merely the fact of the existence of the thing-in-itself, but also something as to its mode of existence. Whereas all this, from the Kantian point of view,

<sup>1</sup> Kuno Fischer, *Geschichte der neueren Philosophie*, 3 Bd. 1860, p. 405.

is unthinkable; were it otherwise, the entire distinction between phenomenon and thing-in-itself, nay more, the entire *Critique*, would fall to pieces. Consequently a conclusion from inner perception and phenomenon to the existence of the thing-in-itself is not merely, as Kant concedes, uncertain and doubtful, but *unjustifiable*, yea, *impossible*.

In defence of this position we might appeal to Kant's own criticism of the arguments for the existence of a God. According to him, the idea of God is a necessary conception of reason which the human mind cannot get rid of—something therefore actually and necessarily present in the human mind. Nevertheless he forbids us to conclude from the necessity of thinking this conception of the reason to the actual existence of God—and why? because no object congruous to this idea can be presented to the senses. For the very same reason we must forbid the inference to the existence of things-in-themselves. Even if there were a necessity of thought, we should not be warranted in inferring their actuality; things-in-themselves are *noumena*, thoughts to which no congruous object can ever be found in or by our senses.

The existence of things-in-themselves can never, therefore, be established by inference. But on what other grounds can I be warranted in maintaining that they do exist? How should I be able to say that they exist, when I am unable in any way to say *what* they are? The existence of a thing can only then be asserted, if it has in some way or other manifested its existence. But all existence is determinate existence. The being of a thing cannot be separated from the mode of its being. It exists only in so far as it is what it is. If it manifest its existence, therefore, it must at the same time manifest along therewith, and in the same proportion, the mode of its existence—that is, its qualities or attributes. If I were to stumble on anything in a dark night, I should not be able to affirm that it was anything at all unless it had in some measure or other revealed what it was; for example,

that it was solid or hard, or had some other quality. I have no right or power to say *that* a thing is, if I am in total ignorance how or what it is.

§ 5. *Kant's statements make it impossible to allow the existence of the thing-in-itself.*

But this is not all. The critical philosophy not only lacks all warrant for attributing existence to things-in-themselves, its premises necessitate the opposite conclusion. Starting from Kant's position, it is *positively impossible to concede even existence to things-in-themselves.*

For, in the first place, as he himself teaches, we know nothing beyond our mode of representing things. But what sort of things must those be concerning which it can be said that our entire knowledge is restricted to the manner in which we represent them. They are not things-in-themselves; for these are precisely what lies beyond the sphere of our mode of representing things; they are exclusively things in their character as objects represented by us, that is, as phenomena. But things which we represent in "our way" are not "things-in-themselves;" consequently the thing-in-itself, as soon as we represent it, ceases to be the thing-in-itself. Now that is as much as to say—the thing-in-itself is a self-contradictory, that is, an impossible, conception. For it involves the demand that we think that as *outside* of our representation of it which we can only think *in* our representation. We are driven accordingly to pronounce the thing-in-itself nonsense—there can be no thing-in-itself.

But, in the second place, if a thing-in-itself existed, it must be the cause of the sensations which constitute the matter of phenomena. Now causality is a category; categories, however, do not bear application to things-in-themselves; consequently, sensations cannot be caused by things-in-themselves. But if

a thing-in-itself is not that which it can alone be conceived to be, it surely cannot exist at all.

Again, in the third place, according to Kant, reality and existence are also categories.<sup>1</sup> But categories can only be applied to phenomena. Reality and existence must therefore not be predicated of the thing-in-itself. But if reality and existence may not be ascribed to it, what else can it be but the unreal, the imaginary? Moreover, categories are only to be met with in the understanding—never outside it. The thing-in-itself cannot therefore have reality and existence. Thus we see that the reality of the thing-in-itself is not merely problematical, as Kant teaches in the section on *phenomena* and *noumena*,<sup>2</sup> but must rather be positively denied. Our faculty of knowledge is so constructed that we are compelled to think a thing-in-itself in addition to and over and above the phenomenon; but in this overleaping of the phenomenal we do not escape a single step outside the sphere of our own consciousness. For the thing-in-itself, as Kant expressly declares, is merely a *limitative* conception of exclusively negative use, inasmuch as it does nothing more than indicate that our knowledge is restricted to phenomena.<sup>3</sup>

Thus regarded, the thing-in-itself would be what is merely thought, a mere noumenon in distinction from that which is empirically given. But, in the fourth place, it cannot be even this. For if it is something thought by the understanding, it must be thought by it under the forms which control and regulate all its thinking as such, namely, the categories. To maintain that the categories are the necessary forms of the thinking function of the understanding would be absurd, if one were at the same time to represent the understanding as not bound to these forms. On the contrary, it is as incapable of temporarily discarding the necessary forms of thought, for the purpose of undertaking an act of thought beyond the limits

<sup>1</sup> *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* (Erdmann), p. 99.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 214.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 227.



imposed by its own nature, as the senses are incapable of intuiting anything apart or aside from the forms of intuition, namely, space and time. But Kant prohibits the use of the categories on anything that lies beyond the phenomenal; we are not to extend them to the thing-in-itself. The thing-in-itself can therefore not only not be known, but *not even be thought*. It is consequently the unthinkable, and that which is unthinkable cannot exist.

The Kantian criticism thus necessarily involves the abolition of the thing-in-itself; consequently also the abolition of the antithesis between thing - in - itself and phenomenon, on which the entire edifice of Kant's theory of knowledge is based. The last barrier between his system and absolute idealism is thus removed. We find, too, as a matter of history, that this conclusion was actually drawn. The philosophy of J. G. Fichte reduced the thing-in-itself to the *non-ego*, which was not even a something conceived as independent of the ego, but was simply something posited by consciousness itself; a limit which the ego set to itself. And this further development was nothing but Kantism carried to its legitimate consequences. All that Fichte did was to discard what had proved itself at the Kantian stage to be untenable.

At the same time, the assumption of the veritable actuality of things - in - themselves is indispensable to Kant's system. Nothing therefore can be more natural than that the question whether he teaches the reality of things-in-themselves should be answered, now in the affirmative, then in the negative. The actual state of the case is brought to light by the development through which his theory of knowledge passed. He himself starts with the assumption of the real existence of things-in-themselves to which the impressions which constitute the matter of phenomena may be traced. The real existence of things outside of us, and independently of our consciousness of them, is an assumption without which he could not have found even a beginning for his philosophy; and he



himself gives it as his opinion that, apart from this presupposition, thought would do nothing but revolve around itself as a centre. Yet, as we have seen, the development of his theory of knowledge led to the rejection of the very presupposition on which it is founded. He begins with this realistic assumption, and ends with its denial. What Fr. H. Jacobi remarks concerning the contradiction thus necessarily cleaving to transcendental idealism is therefore perfectly correct: "How Kant's philosophy could get an entrance into itself, and how an exposition of it could be possible, without presupposing objects which produce impressions on the senses, and in this way give rise to representations, it is impossible to understand; equally impossible to abide by the philosophy if such objects be presupposed."<sup>1</sup>

§ 6. *A further consequence is the overthrow of knowledge.*

But if the critical philosophy, logically carried out, lands us in the denial of the thing-in-itself, what becomes, then, of *knowledge*? Even sensation must in that case be evoked by some cause or other in the mind itself. The entire process of knowledge, therefore, originates solely in factors which belong to the subject itself, *i.e.* are subjective. Consciousness is so ordered that it necessarily begets and goes through this process; or rather, consciousness is itself nothing more than this same process of knowledge. If we ask, What is it that undergoes the process, what is the subject thereof? we receive for reply, "Theoretic philosophy has no knowledge of a real subject of consciousness." We have no right to assume the existence of an underlying real substance—an ego—to which the affections of consciousness may be attributed, by which they are experienced. The proposition, "I think," expresses simply the reference of everything that is thought to the unity of consciousness. That I who think must in the

<sup>1</sup> Fr. H. Jacobi, *Werke*, 2 Bd. pp. 303, 304.

act of thinking always be considered as the subject which thinks, and as something more than a mere predicate of thinking—is an *identical* proposition; but it does not signify that as an object I am a being or substance, with an independent existence of my own.<sup>1</sup> The ego is accordingly merely a function of my thought; it is a part of the necessary form of consciousness; it is necessarily posited along with consciousness; but we are not warranted in ascribing to it objective reality. Consciousness, therefore, is a process without anything that undergoes the process. We might designate this something mind, soul, ego, personality, or by any other name; not one would stand for anything really existent; it would merely be an invariable accompaniment in thought or consciousness. Nor has this process any presuppositions on which it depends, or from which it is derived. Were I to begin the search for a cause of this process of knowledge, I should be making a forbidden use of the notion of causality; for the law of causality is only valid within the mind itself, that is, can only be used for the sphere of experience. The process neither has nor can have a cause; as little can it have an end or purpose. For the conception of design is the conception of a cause which works before it itself has become an actuality. What warrant could we possibly then have for ascribing objective reality to such a conception? The process of knowledge, therefore, can have no presupposition but itself, and no end or goal but itself; it is the beginning and end of all knowledge and all being, the only thing knowable, the only thing existent.

The very consciousness of which Kant set out to explain the process thus becomes in reality the greatest possible riddle, the very riddle of riddles. For that which is preceded by no condition, and has before it no end, is the absolute itself. Shall consciousness, then, be exalted to the throne of the absolute? But how can that be conceived? Our con-

<sup>1</sup> See *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* (Erdmann), p. 286.

sciousness is and remains finite and limited. How shall the finite consciousness be conceived as the absolute; the limited and conditioned as that which rests on no presupposition? Viewed thus, it remains simply not conceived or thought; it is an inexplicable, nay more, an irrational riddle.

§ 7. *The very existence of consciousness, too, becomes doubtful.*

Not merely is consciousness thus converted into an irrational riddle, not merely is it unexplained, but its very existence threatens to become doubtful and to disappear. After objective being had been reduced to nullity, consciousness still remained, and the ideal world which it generates within itself. What, then, is that to which we ascribe actual existence? What is it to exist actually? The only possible answer is, the many finite consciousnesses are the actually existent, or, as Fichte once put it, the only thing that really exists is the human race. But what is the race for the individual consciousness? It again forms part of what we call objective being, in other words, of the world of representations. The race, as distinguished from the individual consciousness, is that which is external to the ego, that is, something represented as in space; consequently, it itself is again merely a species of subjective representation. All that remains, therefore, is the individual consciousness. Kant's subjective philosophy thus lands us necessarily in *Solipsism*—my individual ego is the only reality. Of what then is it permitted me to predicate *being*? All I can say is, my own consciousness exists. But even in affirming that I have gone too far, for as soon as I say *it is*, I apply the categories of reality and existence. Now Kant himself has shown us that categories can only be applied to objects given in sensibility. But consciousness is not thus given. We have no right, therefore, to say of it, *it is*; on the contrary, it is itself nothing but a representation, an idea. All my ideas or

representations are accompanied by the representation or idea of the conjunction of all my representations or ideas in my consciousness ; but it does not cease to be a mere representation or idea because it thus accompanies all my representations. Of the entire process of knowledge there is thus left nothing whatever that can be regarded as a reality, as an actuality.<sup>1</sup> All realities, my own self included, have resolved themselves into mere representation ; and as there is no reality whatever which I could apply to the representation as a test, I am unable any longer to distinguish it from a mere dream. Nor can it any longer be maintained that necessity and universal validity appertain to this representation. The necessity and universal validity asserted by Kant to belong to our knowledge rested on the assumption that it was common to the human race, and that all the members of the human race were organized alike as regards pure reason. But if the human race is converted into a mere subjective representation, there can be no such thing as necessary and universally valid knowledge. And if all law and rule thus disappear from our knowledge, it becomes a purely accidental capricious play of representations, in nowise distinguishable from a dream. However frequently the same images and representations recur in dreams, they do not therefore cease to be dream-pictures.

Kant's anxiety was to set the objectivity of human knowledge on a sure and firm foundation ; his efforts have ended in transforming all knowledge into illusion. The critical philosophy is a philosophy of subjectivity, which first lands us in *solipsism*, and then conducts logically to pure *illusionism* and *nihilism*.

Our criticism of Kant's theory of knowledge has now necessarily reached its goal. If that which was the object of criticism has itself dissolved away, nothing remains upon which criticism can work. It has become evident that the

<sup>1</sup> Cp. Sir W. Hamilton's *Discussions on Reid*, p. 129, note, where is found a quotation from Fichte.—G. B. K.

Kantian theory of knowledge rests on a false foundation, and that, logically followed out, it issues in sheer nonentity. Kant has involuntarily demonstrated that the isolated subject reaches and accomplishes nothing—nay more, that it cannot maintain even its own existence.

§ 8. *The negative result thus reached involves the reverse positive result.*

But this purely negative result is the negation of itself, for a knowledge which knows nothing puts an end to itself. This negative result therefore necessarily involves one that is positive. What this positive result is we shall see if we look back to the course pursued by our negative criticism of the Kantian theory of cognition.

We have seen that, in the first place, by starting with the abstract separation of the thing as it is in itself from the thing as it is for, or as it appears to us, that theory shuts the door in its own face, unless it ascribe to itself beforehand a knowledge which its own principles exclude; that, in the second place, in the course of its further development, it falls into perpetual self-contradictions, and demonstrates its own untenableness; that, in the third place, the abstract separation of the thing as it is in itself from the thing as it for us, involves the entire abolition of objective knowledge; and that, in the fourth place, the same abstract separation necessarily lands us in the denial of the thing as it is in itself.

This theory of cognition, therefore, owing to its inner self-contradictions, is altogether untenable, and makes shipwreck on its own inner impossibility. In fact, to distinguish and separate, in the abstract manner proposed by Kant, between phenomena and things-in-themselves is an impossible task. He made this separation, indeed, the very starting-point of his philosophy; though he never offered more than a show of proof of it. But the complete carrying out of this necessary presupposi-

tion—as he counts it—results in the denial of all knowledge of truth, and at last in an idealism which throws all reality overboard, and plunges into utter nihilism. His own work thus furnishes a complete *reductio ad absurdum* of that preliminary divorce between phenomenon and noumenon which constitutes its point of departure. Things-in-themselves cannot be absolutely outside things as they appear to us: such is the position to which Kant himself, in his own despite, has conducted us. The thing-in-itself and the phenomenon cannot possibly be so related, that the latter is alone in us and the former outside us, absolutely disconnected from the phenomenon. Were this the relation of the two to each other, it would indeed be useless to ask what the thing-in-itself really is. The question cannot, in fact, be put; for the thing-in-itself being *à priori* conceived as the indeterminate, as that whose nature we are unable to describe, the very question involves the impossibility of an answer.<sup>1</sup> It is that to which every sort of determination is directly opposed as being wholly external to it, and belonging solely to the mind. But if the thing-in-itself is simply *x*, the absolutely indeterminate and indeterminable, the phenomenon, too, in its turn loses all real content. When Kant teaches that an appearance (phenomenon) presupposes something that appears, but that this something being the thing-in-itself must be unknowable, he falls into a contradiction. For if the thing-in-itself is totally unknowable, it cannot appear: he therefore speaks of an appearance where there is nothing to appear; and, as he himself confesses, this is nonsense. If it is to be appearance, it must be the appearing of an essence or essential nature, that is, of a thing-in-itself. An appearance must be that in which the being shows itself or appears; and the essential being, or substance, or thing-in-itself, is that which manifests itself in the phenomenon. The thing-in-itself cannot consequently be indeterminate and unknowable. As Hegel

<sup>1</sup> Hegel, *Wissenschaft der Logik*, 1 Bd. 1 Buch (1st ed. 1812, p. 56).



remarks, it is indiscreet to require of the thing-in-itself more than that it should express, and thus show itself. It does not at all follow, on that account, that the essential being is identical with the manifestation, the inner with the outer; that the former has emptied itself into the latter—been taken completely up into it. Nor does this view of the matter imply that the being may be completely fathomed, but merely that it may be known through the medium of its self-manifestation. An appearance in which no being appears is in reality no longer appearance, but empty show.<sup>1</sup> If the essential being or the thing-in-itself cannot be known by means of its manifestation, there is an end to all knowledge of truth—it is reduced to illusion:—contrary to its own purpose, the Kantian theory of cognition proves this to demonstration.

It is a strange inconsistency, to claim to teach truth and at the same time to maintain its unknowableness. This is just the self-contradiction of scepticism, to doubt of all truth, and yet to regard its own doubt as true. How can I lay down what shall be true for me, without building on some foundation or other of knowledge—knowledge that must be absolutely and unconditionally true; in other words, without taking for granted the possibility of a knowledge of the truth in itself? The Kantian philosophy proves that the two stand or fall together. He who denies the knowableness of absolute and essential truth, has no alternative but to deny also the knowableness of that which is truth in relation to us; nay more, he will supply in himself an example and demonstration of the reduction of all truth to mere empty seeming.

Further, Kant has therefore involuntarily furnished the proof that things-in-themselves and phenomena must stand to each other in a different relation from that which he posits. At the very same time, he himself passes beyond the abstract

<sup>1</sup> See Note 10 in Appendix.



separateness which he asserts; nay, more, he cannot help presupposing that things-in-themselves are knowable. For, in tracing to them the sensuous impressions which form the material of our intuitions, he predicates of them causality. But if they can work upon us as causes, they must have a reality of their own; for surely that which works is real. Still further, how shall we account for the great variety of the impressions produced on us by things, the differences in the way in which we are affected by them, but by means of distinctions and determinations found in the things-in-themselves? What relations now do these determinations, which appertain to the things-in-themselves, hold to those of our faculty of knowledge? Were the two totally heterogeneous, how could the things-in-themselves accommodate themselves to the forms of our mind? Are we not therefore driven to assume an inner relation or affinity between them? Kant himself, as we found, could not help ascribing causality and reality to things-in-themselves:—must not then the other categories of our understanding be also predicable of them? If only *one* category, that of reality, belongs to the things-in-themselves, all the rest must belong to them.<sup>1</sup> In some sense or other they must be substances, that is, they must have being in themselves. If they produce impressions on us that qualitatively differ, they themselves must qualitatively differ from each other:—quality, that is, must appertain to them, and so forth. Categories, therefore, have not merely abstractly subjective value. The alternative posited by Kant, that they must *either* be derived, with Hume, exclusively from experience; in which case they are neither *à priori* nor necessary; *or* be found exclusively in us, and inasmuch as they are the condition of the possibility of experience, precede all experience, lacks justification. Granting that there are conceptions of our understanding which lie *à priori* ready in us, and make experience possible, it does not at all follow that they are

<sup>1</sup> See Gideon Spicker, *Kant, Hume, and Berkeley*, Berlin 1875, p. 125.

therefore nothing but determinations of the mind, and have no existence in things-in-themselves. Categories can only be thought in an understanding. Consequently, reasons Kant, they are only to be found in the mind, and they are not to be found in the things. We have seen that this assumption leads to the total abolition of objective rational knowledge. We must therefore reason contrariwise—if the categories are only conceivable in an understanding, they give proof to us of the existence of an understanding in the things themselves which is independent of us; and as reason can but be everywhere in harmony with itself, for, were the contrary the case, objective truth would be inconceivable, things-in-themselves and the knowing mind must hold to each other a relation of necessary correspondence. Here lies the truth of the fundamental thought of the "*Identitäts-philosophie*,"—the truth, namely, that that which knows in us is the same as that which is known. Our understanding must be proportional or answer to things; and its fundamental conceptions must be conceptions of the necessary fundamental relations of things, that is, of the world of the objective.

Thus the Kantian philosophy conducts us to the very opposite of that which it intended. *Things-in-themselves are knowable; and the categories are determinations of things-in-themselves.* This is the *positive result* of its theory of cognition. We must either allow ourselves to be led by Kant beyond Kant to a theory of cognition which admits the possibility of a knowledge of objective truth, or content ourselves with blank *illusionism*; that is, we must speak of appearances in which nothing appears; of senses which perceive nothing; of an understanding which understands nothing real; in a word, we must accept a theory of knowledge which is in reality a theory, a science, a philosophy of ignorance, of agnosticism.

## CHAPTER II.

## KANT'S TRANSCENDENTAL DIALECTIC.

§ 9. *Critical examination of the edifice raised by Kant on his theory of cognition.*

Kant's theory of knowledge forms the basis of his entire philosophy. This basis having shown itself to be untenable, the examination of the edifice built thereon need not detain us long.

The *Transcendental Dialectic* deduces the conclusions affecting the conceptions of pure reason which flow from the epistemological principles laid down by him. The understanding is the faculty of thinking finite things under the form of conceptions. These conceptions of the understanding, however, contain no more than the unity of reflection on phenomena, so far as they are supposed to belong of necessity to a possible empirical consciousness.<sup>1</sup> Reason, on the contrary, as the faculty of principles, seeks to discover the unconditioned, which answers to and completes the conditioned knowledge of the understanding—that unconditioned without which the knowledge of the understanding would lack unity.<sup>2</sup> Its conceptions are therefore inferences, and relate to something which is and will ever remain beyond experience. The conceptions thus arrived at by inference, and not merely by reflection, are designated transcendental ideas. They are the ideas of the *Soul*, as the absolute unity of the thinking subject; of the *World*, as the absolute unity of the series of conditions of phenomena, or of the sum-total of phenomena; and of the *Deity* as the absolute unity of the condition of all objects of thought whatever, or of the being of all beings.<sup>3</sup>

Kant shows that the reality of the said ideas cannot be

<sup>1</sup> *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* (Erdmann), p. 262.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 260.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 263, 276 f.

proved. By the theory of cognition, which he had previously expounded, all real knowledge was limited to experience. We have, it is true, an *à priori* knowledge; but this relates merely to the empty forms under which we perceive or intuit and know, as the conditions of possible experience. They lack content until they are referred to an object given in perception. Real knowledge first becomes ours when phenomena, that is, objects of empirical perception (intuition), are subsumed under categories of the understanding. Now, inasmuch as objects answering to the said ideas cannot be given in sensibility, that is, presented to the senses, we can have no knowledge of them. When, therefore, our reason forms these ideas, it is simply drawing conclusions from something we know to something of which we have no sort of conception. To form a conception of the understanding regarding the objects of the reason is impossible; for conceptions of the understanding are such as can become matter of perception as phenomena. If, nevertheless, we apply the conceptions of the understanding, contrary to their own nature, to the objects denoted by the transcendental ideas, the result is that the reason becomes entangled in deception and seeming, in illicit conclusions, in a dialectic of illusion. In *psychology* it substitutes a really existent ego, as object or as soul, for the ego, which is merely the formal subject of the process of thought; in *cosmology* it gets entangled in irreconcilable antinomies, finding itself compelled to lay down and establish contradictory propositions regarding the same object; as, for example, with regard to the limitedness and unlimitedness of the world in time and space, and the freedom of the will and determinism; *theology*, finally, has for its object an ideal of the pure reason, which is nothing more than a subjective necessity of thought, from which no conclusion as to its objective reality can be drawn.

The ideas of the reason are, therefore, not constitutive principles of transcendent knowledge, that is, of knowledge

passing beyond experience. Only an immanent use may consequently be made of them; that is, they may be brought into relation with objects of the understanding only. "Reason never enters into direct relation to objects, but solely to the understanding, and by means thereof to its own empirical use; it is not its business therefore to supply conceptions of objects, but merely to order them and to give them that unity which they may have in their utmost possible extension."<sup>1</sup> Reason, accordingly, may be described as the understanding of the understanding, and transcendental ideas are simply principles by which the use of the understanding is to be regulated, which prescribe the method by which the knowledge of nature, as the legitimate field of reason, may be conducted or reduced to the greatest possible systematic unity.

It appears then that, with regard to everything that lies beyond sensuous experience, we are condemned to complete ignorance. The understanding applies its forms of thought exclusively to sensuous objects, without, however, gaining thereby any truer acquaintance with the real nature of things, seeing that it can never have anything to do with things-in-themselves, but merely with subjective phenomena. No use whatever can be made of the categories of the understanding on that which is beyond the range of sense and its affections. The human mind is therefore incapable of knowing truth.

A singular result this, at which the *Critique of Pure Reason* thus arrives. It limits real knowledge entirely to sensuous experience; but as sensuous experience can merely supply us with subjective appearances, it follows, or rather is *ipso facto* declared, that truth lies not in sensuous experience, but beyond and above it. We are also at the same time assured that knowledge of whatever transcends sensuous experience is merely the semblance of knowledge—illusion. On the one hand, therefore, that is set before us as truth which, on the

<sup>1</sup> *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* (Erdmann), p. 671.

principles laid down, can only be regarded as subjective appearance; and, on the other hand, that in which the truth by rights ought to be sought, is declared to be a mere figment of the fancy, mere show and illusion.

§ 10. *An end is thus put theoretically to all religion.*

For religion has to do with what essentially is, with the absolutely true, that is, with that which is true independently of our consciousness. At first sight, indeed, the result thus arrived at may seem favourable to the Christian faith. If it be true that reason is incapable of knowing supersensuous things, must not a revelation be necessary? The position described seems to correspond to the doctrine of the Church, that human reason is blind in relation to God and divine things.

In point of fact, however, the very possibility of a revelation is thus denied. For revelation is surely in some sense or other the communication of a knowledge which man has not apart from revelation. But Kant has shown us that the laws to which our knowledge is subjected, themselves prevent us from knowing anything supersensuous. Revelation cannot affect this position of matters; for the knowledge given by revelation, so far as it is to be human knowledge, must clearly be subject to the necessary conditions on which men know. Consequently such a thing as knowledge by means of revelation is impossible. The very capability of receiving a revelation is thus denied to the human mind; and the will of God to reveal Himself, if such a will existed, must always be frustrated by the incapacity inherent in the very constitution of the human mind. The blindness of human reason is thus radical and incurable.

How far this conclusion is from being legitimate and well founded may be shown with little difficulty. It stands and falls with the theory of cognition, which it presupposes, and from which it is drawn. That entire theory having been



shown to be self-contradictory and untenable, the conclusion drawn from it by Kant, that we are incapable of a knowledge of the objects to which transcendental ideas relate, becomes, *ipso facto*, invalid and null. Specially groundless is the assumption, that because no objects answering to those ideas can be given in sense, therefore they must be unknowable. For even the thing-in-itself, that transcendental object which lies at the basis of all that appears, even that, according to Kant, is not given in sense; yet, as we have seen, his theory of cognition is driven, against its own purpose, to confess that the thing-in-itself must be knowable. Clearly, then, the proposition that the supersensuous cannot be regarded as true because it is not sensuously perceptible, is essentially *self-contradictory*. A barbarous way this of philosophizing upon the highest conceptions of the human intellect. A condition is thus laid down which is altogether foreign and contradictory to the thing to which it relates. It is a tautological proposition, that the supersensuous is not sensuous. Naturally enough. How could the infinite so make itself known as that we should be able to form a sensuous image of it? But, as Hegel justly remarks, "it is scarcely the thing to ask of the infinite that it prove its existence by means of sensuous perception; mind exists only for mind."<sup>1</sup> The conceptions of reason are to be regarded as mere ideas; we are told, to ascribe to which essential truth and reality "would be an act of utter caprice and fool-hardihood." And why? "Because they cannot occur in experience." "Who could ever have imagined," asks Hegel, "that philosophy would deny reality and truth to the *intelligibilia*, simply because they are destitute of the temporally and spiritually determined matter of sense?"<sup>2</sup>

Kant supposes himself to have proved that real knowledge is entirely limited to sensuous experience; whence he draws the conclusion that there can be no knowledge of that which is

<sup>1</sup> Hegel's *Geschichte der Philosophie*, p. 575.

<sup>2</sup> Hegel's *Logik*, 2 Bd. p. 21.



beyond sensuous experience, showing at the same time that the inferences of reason, which are supposed notwithstanding to guide us to such knowledge, are all invalid. At this point, however, he overlooks the fact that there is an immediate certainty which precedes every inference of reason and all reflection of the understanding, and which in point of strength of conviction is inferior to no certainty based on inference. Whether there are things *outside* of us at all must always remain doubtful, if it were not matter of immediate certitude. For it is absolutely impossible to prove their existence by any kind of reasoning. All I could possibly do would be to infer from affections of my consciousness the existence of something which I represent to myself as outside of me; but as this representation is itself in turn a part of the contents of my consciousness, the question still arises, how I am to pass from this content of consciousness to a being outside of my consciousness? According to Hartmann,<sup>1</sup> the problem to be solved by a theory of cognition is this—Whether consciousness can transcend its immanent sphere, and attain to that which is in and of itself? And if so, how? But to put the problem in this shape is to put it so as to show the impossibility of a solution. The very form of statement involves a specific presupposition, namely, the Kantian one of the abstract separation of subject and object, of consciousness and essential being. If this be conceded, there is no such thing as a bridge from one to the other; all our knowledge lies within a circle out of which there is no exit; and that circle is the subject itself; objective reality is inaccessible. But this abstract separation is not a necessary, it is an arbitrary assumption; instead of being a first principle, an original position, it is the disintegration of an original unity. We must either be prepared to renounce all objective knowledge, or to allow that what Kant dualistically puts asunder should really be conceived as constituting an original and immediate

<sup>1</sup> Hartmann, *Philosophie des Unbewussten*, p. 802.

unity. If this unity is not given and posited in an original act of consciousness as such, it can never be established by any succeeding process of reflection. But a consideration of the very nature of consciousness shows us that in it subjective and objective are immediately combined, and that though in their union they may well be distinguished from each other, they cannot be separated.

§ 11. *Self-consciousness the solid starting-point of all knowledge.*

The fixed *point d'appui* and starting-point of all real knowledge is self-consciousness. We are immediately certain of ourselves, of our own being. But we become conscious of ourselves only in relation to things outside of ourselves, and in the act of distinguishing them from ourselves. The reality of things out of us is therefore as certain as the reality of our own self. The one stands and falls with the other. The moment, therefore, Kant separated objective and subjective consciousness from each other, instead of simply distinguishing them whilst at the same time confessing their inner relatedness, the reality alike of subject and object became doubtful,—became, in fact, a problem. For him the ego is simply a function of consciousness; hence his inference that the existence of the soul cannot be proved. Yet when the ego recognises itself as the principle of its own thought, it is in the very act certain of its own reality; and this certitude is so clear and certain that it serves as a presupposition for all other forms of certitude—nay more, without it nothing whatever could be thought as certain.<sup>1</sup> And in this consciousness there is posited the consciousness of an objective world outside of us.

*Equally too the consciousness of an absolute being.* Kant has refuted the traditional proofs of the existence of God. But

<sup>1</sup> See Note 11 in Appendix.

all proofs of the existence of God presuppose the idea of God. How does this idea itself come to be ours? It cannot possibly become ours through the mere expansion of our knowledge of finite things. For how could I arrive at the infinite and absolute by a process of expanding the finite and conditioned, unless I previously had the idea of the infinite and absolute in me? Besides, the infinite is not a mere expansion of the finite; the distinction between the two is not merely one of degree; the infinite is not simply the negation of the finite, but a positive reality. How then could the finite fill me with the idea of that which it itself does not contain, if my consciousness does not beforehand of itself reach out beyond the finite? There is no way, therefore, in which the consciousness of God could be abstracted from the consciousness of the world, or be generated by the mere contemplation of nature. This, indeed, is so evident, that even a mind as negative as that of David Strauss, at a time when he had not yet thrown himself into the arms of Darwinism and Materialism, was compelled to confess that the idea of God, like the other "ideas," "had its essential or potential ground in the very constitution of the human mind, and is only developed and brought to consciousness by outward perceptions and experiences;"<sup>1</sup> that the conviction of the existence of an absolute being must therefore, in the last instance, be drawn out of our own inner being, the contemplation of the external world simply serving to evoke it or call it forth.<sup>2</sup> Human consciousness is in itself, *ipso facto*, at one and the same time knowledge of itself and knowledge of an absolute being; man cannot become conscious of himself without becoming aware of his relation to an absolute being.<sup>3</sup>

If, then, the consciousness of God is necessarily posited along with the consciousness of self, the former can no more rest on illusion than the latter. Moreover, the idea of God as

<sup>1</sup> Strauss, *Die christliche Glaubenslehre*, vol. i. 379.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 385.

<sup>3</sup> See Note 12 in Appendix.

such *involves its reality*. This kernel of the ontological argument Kant's criticism did not succeed in upsetting; and it is surely a piece of intolerable scepticism to characterize the idea of God, with Kant, as an essential and necessary thought of human reason, and yet at the same time to controvert our right to ascribe to it reality, on the ground that the existence of an object does not necessarily follow from its being conceived.<sup>1</sup> Such a course of procedure is only possible to a dualism which capriciously rends subjective and objective truth asunder, and by doing so, as we have seen, renounces the attainment of rational knowledge. We scarcely need, indeed, to disclaim the notion that any and every representation of any and every object necessarily involves the reality of the object; but reason contains within itself the conditions of recognising the contingency and non-essentiality of any particular representation or idea. If, however, the idea of the absolute unity and truth of all being is an essentially true and necessary thought, which Kant affirms, then, as the absolute principle of all things cannot be otherwise conceived than as having existence, the idea thereof necessarily involves the certainty of its own reality; nor can such reality be denied it without pronouncing human reason radically deceptive or illusive, and thus entirely doing away with the objective truth of rational knowledge as such.<sup>2</sup> We possess then an immediate and original certainty of the existence of God as of that of our own existence. But this is not all. Kant recognises only sensuous experience, and consequently denies to us an experimental knowledge of God. As though we had no experience of our own inner life without the intervention of the senses! The mind, the soul, is surely the most proper and veritable object of its own experience. So, too, God is the object of experience—not indeed of sensuous, but of spiritual or mental

<sup>1</sup> See Note 13 in Appendix.

<sup>2</sup> Karl Philipp Fischer, *Grundzüge des Systems der Philosophie*, vol. iii. 1855, p. 100; see also his *Die Idee der Gottheit*, p. 45. See Note 14 in Appendix.

experience. He is inwardly apprehended and perceived ; and this comes about, on the one hand, because He enters into living relation to man, and gives Himself to be apprehended by him ; and, on the other hand, because the capability of discerning and perceiving the Divine Spirit is grounded in the kinship of man to God. By means of this rational sensibility, or, in other words, of this organ for the perception of the absolute, man perceives God in his own inner being,<sup>1</sup> no less than in the processes of nature and in the course of human history. And the universal human reason, which expresses itself in the *consensus gentium*, that is, in the fact that all nations through their religions testify to the existence of a Divine Being, has a right to claim the recognition of its reality and truth. Even a David Strauss could not help granting, that "a kernel of truth is as certainly to be found in any notion universally diffused among nations, as a shell of ignorance and imagination."<sup>2</sup> Were we to hold that the mind of universal man could and necessarily must fall a prey to illusion anent the question of the existence of God, "we should be withholding from it," says a recent writer, "the respect which is its due, and ought not to characterize this unbelief of the possibility of the knowledge of truth as modesty. On the contrary, the conceit of having put a complete end to the scientific investigation of objective truth really involves the haughty presumption of pronouncing judgment on the systems of all the philosophers who have honestly and truly followed in the footsteps of Plato, as well as a renunciation of that knowledge of the truth which is the end and aim of all true culture, and should by no means be regarded as humility and self-restraint."<sup>3</sup> So, too, says Hegel,

<sup>1</sup> See Note 15 in Appendix.

<sup>2</sup> D. F. Strauss, *Die christliche Glaubenslehre*, vol. i. p. 395.

<sup>3</sup> With such expressions of indignation does a calm and sober inquirer like K. Ph. Fischer repel the scepticism of Kant. See his *Grundzüge des Systems der Philosophie*, vol. i. p. 31. Fr. von Baader also expresses himself to the same effect and in the same manner.

"It is a very false Christian humility and modesty that aims at distinguishing itself by emphasizing its own miserableness. A recognition, like this, of its own emptiness is rather a piece of inordinate self-complacency. We ought rather to rise above such spurious self-abasement, and to commend true humility by laying hold of the divine."<sup>1</sup>

God then, like the soul, is an object of immediate certitude and of spiritual experience. But if this be the case, the task is imposed on the intellect of thinking out what is thus given as a matter of certainty and experience, and of dealing with it scientifically in harmony with the general laws and conditions of knowledge.

According to Kant, indeed, this is absolutely impossible, inasmuch as the conceptions of the understanding are applicable solely to phenomena. Whence also he denies that God and the soul can be objects of theoretical knowledge, and relegates both ideas to the domain of the *practical reason*. But even here, too, he falls into palpable contradictions. Either the supersensuous is unthinkable, or it must be thought under the forms which govern thought in general. If, however, it be absolutely unthinkable, its existence is no longer problematical—it must simply be denied. But this is not what Kant intends. In his view, the transcendental ideas are necessary products of the reason, consequently thinkable by the reason; though we are not warranted in attributing to them objective reality. Yet if they are really thinkable, they must be thinkable according to the laws to which all thought as such is subject. Hence, in conceding the thinkableness of the supersensuous, Kant himself concedes that the use of the categories is not restricted solely to phenomena, that is, to empirical intuitions; but that they may also be applied to the supersensuous.<sup>2</sup> We have seen already that the thing-in-itself, which, according to Kant, is

<sup>1</sup> Hegel's *Werke*, vol. xv. 2nd ed. p. 529.

<sup>2</sup> See Note 16 in Appendix.



the transcendental object lying at the foundation or back of the phenomenal, is by no means outside the domain of the categories ; that, on the contrary, as soon as the abstract separation of the thing-in-itself and the thing for us is given up, that moment the applicability of the categories to the former as well as to the latter has to be conceded.

§ 12. *The categories applicable also to the supersensual.*

We now further discover that the categories relate also to the *supersensuous*, to the objects of the transcendental ideas ; and that even if their reality is to be denied, they cannot be otherwise thought than under the categories of the understanding. These categories therefore are not merely subjective forms of our consciousness, incapable of containing the truth,<sup>1</sup> but the laws of our thought have an absolute and all-embracing truth and validity. To deny this is to do away with the objective truth of knowledge. If the categories are, as Kant teaches, merely a subjective arrangement and determination of our faculty of knowledge, we are unable by their means to know anything ; for by the very fact of their application, everything that becomes an object of our knowledge is transformed into a mere relation to ourselves, which as such exists solely in us, not outside of us ; all knowledge is accordingly reduced to a simple relation of our knowing to itself.

It cannot be, however, that the conceptions of our understanding are applicable solely to a limited domain of existences—say, that embraced by sensuous experience ; and that what lies beyond, namely, supersensuous and religious truth, the world of the *intelligibilia*, follows other laws—laws which are not binding for our rational thought. Kant, it is true, represents the objectivity of knowledge as consisting exclusively in its universal validity, that is, for men. Whether

<sup>1</sup> See Note 17 in Appendix.



the laws of our thought are valid for beings of a different organization and for an absolute intelligence, must, he maintains, always remain doubtful. Though twice two are equal to four for us, it must, on this view, be open to question, whether twice two may not equal five for non-human beings; and whether to an absolute intelligence the one statement no less than the other may be erroneous. Were this the case, the laws of identity and contradiction, which dominate all human thought whatever be its subject, could not be true in themselves; and not only would human thought be resolved into mere subjective opinion, but there never could be under any circumstances anything essentially true, any objective truth; there would remain nothing but particular and subjective truths, which are valid solely in relation to the individuals thinking them, and to their special constitution, and which might readily be mutually contradictory. If we are not prepared entirely to deny objective truth, and thus to give up the very notion of rational knowledge, we shall be compelled to allow that the laws of reason are objectively and absolutely valid and necessary; yea, that not merely for other creatures than men, but also for deity. To assume that human nature has been arbitrarily or accidentally organized to think according to the laws imposed on it, would involve the complete destruction of objective truth. The laws of reason have not been capriciously prescribed by the Creator. That our subjective reason is organized as it is, can only be grounded in the fact that, as such, it is in harmony with the objective reason of the universe, and with the absolute reason to which both alike owe their origin. It cannot possibly be otherwise if the finite reason is an image of the absolute reason, inwardly akin thereto and a participator therein. If this be not the case, how can it be regarded as reason at all? Only on the assumption that the laws of human reason are identical with those which the absolute reason by an inner necessity of its own nature bears or contains within itself,

and which belong to the objective reason immanent in the universe, can there be such a thing as objective truth, or the capability of recognising it. Truth, then, is as really truth in itself as it is truth for us; whereas, as we have seen, if truth for us is to be separated from the truth as it is in itself, truth even for us can no longer be retained.

In this case, however, there is no longer any meaning in the affirmation that the supersensuous cannot be known by us. Does it not belong to the domain of the very same reason in which we ourselves participate? Nor may the deity any longer be regarded as something foreign and heterogeneous, if on no other ground, because our own rational knowledge necessarily presupposes an absolute reason; for it would cease to be rational if it did not participate in the absolutely Rational. And this absolutely Rational cannot be a mere representation, a mere idea having subjective validity, but must have a real existence; unless it have, all our rational knowledge resolves itself into simple illusion. Our thinking can have objective truth only on the supposition of such real existence.

On the other hand, it is easily seen that if the categories are merely forms of our subjective knowledge, our knowledge can only have relative truth. On this supposition, absolute truth would be an impossibility for us; nay more, the very thought of an absolute would be impossible. It could not then even be said, as Kant in contradiction to his own theory of cognition says, that the idea of the absolute is to be regarded as a necessary conception of the reason; on the contrary, the assumption of the subjectivity of the forms of our knowledge necessarily involves the exclusion of the idea of the absolute from our thought; the relative alone can then be matter of thought. In maintaining the contrary, Kant contradicts himself. But if, as considered in itself, he rightly enough maintains, though inconsistently with his theory of cognition, the idea of God is a necessary conception of the

human reason; and if it is the idea of that object the very conception of which necessarily implies its own reality,—which can only be questioned by a dualism and scepticism like Kant's own,—a basis of necessity is provided for the objective truth of our knowledge in this actually existing relation. For the absolutely unconditioned is that by which everything else is conditioned. Everything, therefore, is subject to the conditions which the unconditioned bears within itself. Everything that exists stands consequently in a necessary relation to an absolutely *beënt*, an absolutely true and valid; for this same reason all things that exist must be inwardly related to and agree with each other.<sup>1</sup> The organization of our intelligence must therefore by its very constitution be inwardly related alike to the absolute being and to the objective universe; it cannot be determined by laws which are absolutely heterogeneous to the latter, but must be proportional to it. The ultimate ground, both of the intelligibility of things and of the objective truth of our thinking, is therefore the relation alike of the objective world and of the human mind to an absolute being, and the relation therein involved of all the spheres of being to each other. As far as this point is concerned, it does not matter whether the pantheistic or theistic view of the absolute is adopted. But if, with materialism and atheism, the absolute be altogether denied, or with the critical philosophy regarded as non-existent for the theoretical intellect, we shall be shut up by an internal necessity to a theory of cognition that converts and resolves all objective truth into truth that is merely relative and subjective.

So impossible, then, is it to eliminate the knowledge of a really existent absolute from theoretical philosophy, and to treat the existence of God as non-real for the theoretical reason, that apart from the recognition alike of the absolute and God, in other words, of a God who is the Absolute, it is

<sup>1</sup> See Note 18 in Appendix.

impossible to arrive at a theory that could supply a guarantee of the objective truth of human knowledge.<sup>1</sup> But if God—not merely as an idea, but as a real existence—is the supreme condition of the objective truth of our theoretical knowledge, the doctrine of a really existing God cannot possibly be foreign and heterogeneous to theoretical thought, but must have a place within the same. Indeed, Kant himself did not succeed in proving that the objects to which the transcendental ideas refer are not also objects of the theoretical reason. We have also seen that the theoretical intelligence has an immediate knowledge and a spiritual experience, not only of itself, but also of God. God, therefore, as well as the soul, is an object of theoretical knowledge; and the knowledge of both is revindicated for the theoretical reason.

### CHAPTER III.

#### KANT'S PRACTICAL PHILOSOPHY.

##### § 13. *Moral and religious truth to be established through the practical reason.*

After having shown, as he thought, that theoretical knowledge, so far as it is real, is altogether restricted to sensuous experience, and thus set impassable limits to knowledge, Kant proceeded to lay what he considers a sure foundation for moral and religious truth, and thus to regain what theoretical philosophy had been obliged to surrender, in the *Critique of the Practical Reason*.

We find the moral law as an actuality of our consciousness, as a fact of reason, in existence. So far as the moral law is the determining principle or ground of the will, so far does it necessarily presuppose moral liberty. But the object of a will that can be determined by the moral law is, of necessity, the realization and promotion of the highest good,

<sup>1</sup> See Note 19 in Appendix.

that is, of the most perfect virtue in combination with the most complete happiness. Inasmuch as entire conformity of the will to the moral law is the supreme condition and "the first and foremost part of the highest good," therefore practically necessary, whilst, at the same time, such conformity is nowhere to be found in the world of sense, it can only be attained by a *progressus in infinitum*; hence the postulate of the *immortality of the soul*.<sup>1</sup> Still further, happiness, as the agreement of nature with morality, presupposes a *cause* of nature distinct from nature, which contains within itself the ground of the connection. The cause, moreover, of this happiness can only be one that is congruous or agreeable to the moral spirit or disposition; the cause of nature must therefore be a being endowed with understanding and will. The postulate of the possibility of the highest good is consequently identical with that of the existence of God.<sup>2</sup>

In this way it becomes evident that what was transcendent for the speculative reason is immanent in the practical reason, though only for a practical purpose. For neither the nature of our soul, nor the world of invisible realities (*mundus intelligibilis*), nor the Supreme Being, thus become knowable as they are in themselves; all that can be said is that we possess the conceptions of them, conjoined in the practical conception of the highest good; which supreme is the necessary object of our will, as bound to be determined by the moral law.<sup>3</sup> The three conceptions, *freedom, immortality, God*, which remained problematic to the theoretic reason, are now, it is true, recognised as conceptions to which objects actually correspond; they possess objective reality; but we have not therefore attained a knowledge of these objects; no synthetic judgment whatever can be pronounced on them, because we have nothing of the nature of an intuition or perception of them; no theoretical use can therefore be

<sup>1</sup> *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft*, Riga 1797, p. 219 ff.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 223 f.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 240.

made of them.<sup>1</sup> The certainty of these postulates is in no respect theoretical, consequently not apodeictical, that is, a necessity as regards the object, but merely an assumption necessary as regards the subject, in view of the fact that it has to follow its practical laws; in short, the necessity of these postulates, as a hypothesis, is merely as the presupposition of moral activity.<sup>2</sup>

These are the fundamental thoughts of Kant's practical philosophy, from which follows, by necessary inference, the reduction of religion to morality, attempted by Kant in his work, *Religion within the Limits of Pure Reason*.<sup>3</sup>

But this entire method of separating the theoretical and practical reason, denying, as it does, that the conceptions of the practical reason can be objects of theoretical knowledge, because being things-in-themselves and supersensuous they cannot be given in (sensuous) intuition, has really no basis. For, as we have seen, Kant, when dealing with the theoretical reason, did not succeed in showing that a theoretical knowledge of things-in-themselves is impossible; his own positions lead, indeed, rather to the opposite assumption. Things-in-themselves cannot be absolutely unknowable unless all our knowledge is to vanish in sheer illusion and nihilism. There is therefore no theoretical justification for this disjunction of the practical from the theoretical reason—a disjunction involving the denial of the theoretical knowableness of moral and religious truths.

Further, the disjunction is *essentially unthinkable*—and that too *objectively* considered. For the absolutely good is necessarily one and the same with the absolutely true—as certainly as that the absolute itself is only one, and in the diverse relations of its essence necessarily identical with itself. Kant obscures the relation at the very outset, by treating truth as mere appearance, instead of as that which

<sup>1</sup> *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft*, Riga 1797, p. 243.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 23.

<sup>3</sup> *Die Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der reinen Vernunft*.



is true in itself; thus, as we have seen, denying the very existence of rational knowledge. But if the object of theoretical knowledge is that which is true in itself as well as true for us, and the absolutely true is identical with the absolutely good, it follows that the good must be as much an object of theoretical knowledge as the true.

Looking at the question from the point of view of the *subject*, it is impossible thus abstractly to separate the cognizing man from the man who morally wills; or to isolate either of them. Moral volition necessarily involves some measure of knowledge; for the moral will cannot set before itself as an object of volition that which it does not know. A man must have some knowledge of that which he set before him as object of volition and activity. *Ignoti nulla cupido*—holds true also of moral desire. On the other hand, some measure or form of volition is also a constitutive element in all knowledge. One has to will to know the truth in order to know it. How can the domain of the practical reason be isolated from that of the theoretical, as long as the theoretically-intellectual and the morally-practical consciousness cannot be separated from each other?

Still further, practical philosophy itself consists after all in the application of the rules of the cognitive reason to the objects which form its subject-matter. Kant himself was consequently unable to carry out the separation which he demanded. How could there be a critique, that is, a theory of the practical reason, if the theoretical and practical reason are thoroughly heterogeneous?

Theoretical knowledge is surely never anything but an activity of the theoretical reason. If, then, a theory of the practical reason is set up, the practical reason is, *ipso facto*, constituted an object of knowledge for the theoretical reason. The two cannot therefore be mutually exclusive domains; on the contrary, when that which forms the content of the practical reason becomes an object of knowledge and in-



vestigation to the theoretical reason, it is taken into the domain of the latter. In this way the entire separation which Kant attempts to effect between the two spheres is, as a matter of fact, again set aside by him.

Further still, the opposition which Kant thus endeavours, though unsuccessfully, to establish between practical and theoretical philosophy, between the willing and acting man and man as knowing, would deprive the content of the practical reason, especially the moral law, of its objective significance. He maintains, indeed, that the moral law is a law not merely for men but for all rational beings, not excluding even the infinite being, the supreme intelligence.<sup>1</sup> From the point of view, however, of the Critical Philosophy, this is an untenable assertion. Kant would only have been justified in advancing it, if he had taught that in the moral consciousness we know and perceive, and know an absolutely good will, which exists in and of itself independently of us and our knowledge, and which makes itself known to us as the unconditioned norm of all moral activity. In his view, on the contrary, the human will is autonomous, and in a practical respect as truly legislative as the theoretical reason is in relation to theoretical thought. As the theoretical reason is the sole principle of the laws of its thinking, so is "the autonomy of the will the sole principle of moral laws and of the duties which answer to them,"<sup>2</sup>—such is his express doctrine. The practical reason gives itself its own laws; and the obligatoriness of the moral law is grounded, not on its being the manifestation of a will that exists independently of us, and is the absolute norm by which our will is bound and morally determined, but solely on the constitution and necessity of our own will. The originality and apriority of the moral law are thus guarded against all attempts to represent it as imported into man from without; but then the subject is isolated with its moral volition, and is constituted

<sup>1</sup> *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft*, p. 57.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 58.

the sole and exclusive lawgiver of its own moral nature. The obligatoriness of the moral law, according to this view of it, is rooted solely in the fact that the subject knows itself to be identical with itself and its own moral constitution; not in the fact that it is conscious of being related to an absolutely good will, which is the absolute norm of all rational beings; nor in the fact that it is conscious of being related to an autonomous moral reason indwelling in the objective universe. As a matter of course, it can only enact laws for itself—not for other beings. The validity of the moral law is for men. There is neither necessity nor justification for extending it to other beings besides man, if such exist. We find the moral law as a fact of our reason; but this tells us no more than simply that it is a fact of our own reason. Whether it is also a law for other beings—that is beyond our right or power to determine.

§ 14. *The moral consciousness can in this case claim only subjective and relative value.*

What dignity belongs then to the moral law relatively to man? If the good be separated from the true, the good necessarily ceases to be the essentially true. The objective truth of the good is thus denied; the good is no longer true save in the subjective sense; the good therefore is only good in the same subjective sense and with the same limitations. The moral consciousness is not the apprehension of an absolutely good, but merely a relation of man to himself—an apprehension of something which has validity solely for the man himself, and which consequently possesses merely subjective and relative value.

Precisely the same conclusion is forced on us by reflection on the nature of our knowledge as set forth in Kant's theoretical philosophy. It recognises no essential truth,—no truth *per se*,—but solely truth for us: that is true which is

true in relation to the human mind, and the objectivity of human knowledge consists solely in its conformity to law. If the laws of thought, although like the moral law resting on a necessity of our spiritual nature, are not necessary in themselves, essentially necessary, it is a contradiction to assert for the moral law a necessity which is denied to the thought-laws. From this it follows that the moral law is the law of our will, not because it is good in itself, but simply because it is the law of our own nature. But if it is not the good in and of itself which is to serve as the norm for our volitions, then there exists no truly objective norm of moral volition at all. What we call good is merely good in relation to the subjective constitution of our own nature; and it is not a matter of inner necessity at all that our moral nature is constituted just as it is. Accordingly the distinction between good and evil has merely subjective force and meaning. As in the *Critique of Pure Reason* the distinction between true and false, objectively considered, is set aside and reduced to a mere relation; so in the *Critique of the Practical Reason*, the distinction between good and evil. Truth and falsehood, good and evil, are altogether subjective conceptions, not perhaps as far as the individual man is concerned, and not placed at the sole determination of individuals; yet as far as the human race is concerned: and they altogether lack essential validity—validity *per se*. There may possibly be beings differently organized, whose conception of good and evil is different from ours; or for which it has no existence at all.

It appears, therefore, that the very thing which, after the limitation of our intellect to the phenomenal, consciousness could alone regard as having essential being, as lying beyond the merely phenomenal world, and as wielding authority over man, namely, the moral law, is found on closer examination to be something merely subjective and relative.

Kant's Practical Philosophy thus places itself as glaringly

in antagonism to the moral consciousness of humanity as his theoretical philosophy to the natural consciousness of truth. For the moral consciousness is the knowledge of an objective good existing in and of itself, manifesting itself to or in conscience as the absolute norm of the will. Hence our moral judgments rest on the assumption that the good has not merely a relative, but an absolute value; and that there is as absolute a distinction between good and evil, as there is between truth and falsehood. How could we decide that anything is morally good in relation to our will, without presupposing an absolute good as the standard by which it is measured? <sup>1</sup>

But in that the good is thus separated from the true, and the practical reason from the theoretical, the moral consciousness is also isolated from the consciousness of objective truth: it ceases therefore *ipso facto* to be the consciousness of a good which is good in itself; it becomes a simple subjective determination of the mind, in the sense in which the forms and laws of theoretical thought are the same, and thus forfeits objective content.

But there necessarily follows herefrom the further consequence, that even the *postulates* of the practical reason must be destitute of objective truth. They are assumptions grounded on the moral organization of our spiritual nature,—an organization which cannot be maintained to be characterized by objective necessity; they are therefore assumptions, which have validity only for the moral consciousness of man. The position is therefore not this—that though it is impossible for us to establish in an objectively valid way the independent truth of the contents of the practical postulates, we can still retain a moral certainty of them. It is not permissible for me to say, “I cherish the moral conviction that there is a God, and that I have an immortal soul.” No! all I can say is, “I am morally certain

<sup>1</sup> Note 20 in Appendix.

that I must think so ; my moral consciousness compels me to do so : but I am not able to maintain that what I think is objectively true."

It is thus evident that the theoretical idealism to which the Practical Philosophy was intended to furnish a necessary complement, by establishing, as Kant thought, once for all, the fact that moral and religious truth is completely independent of the conclusions of theoretical thought, lands us necessarily in a *practical* and *moral idealism* which, though it recognises the moral and religious idea as actually a constituent factor of human nature, is unable to assert for it objective truth.

§ 15. *Theoretical and Practical Philosophy are thus brought into conflict with each other.*

Not only, however, are the moral law and the practical postulates deprived of objective truth,—the disjunction of the practical from the theoretical philosophy renders it *impossible for the two domains to dwell together in peace*. It must not be supposed that the positions of the theoretical philosophy do not interfere with those of the practical ; or that the former keeps the domain of the latter quite open, and does not intrude into it. The practical philosophy, as we have seen, can only be constructed on condition that its objects are thought according to the conceptions of the theoretical. But the nature of these conceptions is defined in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. If then, in opposition to the principles of the theoretical reason, they are applied to the objects of the practical, the result will necessarily be to rob the entire domain of the latter of its value, and to degrade moral and religious truth to the position of mere phenomena.

Suppose we ask the question, how we are to be certain at all regarding the reality of the moral law, Kant replies, It is given as a fact of pure reason. If this be the case, how can

we gain certitude with regard to this fact otherwise than by means of inner experience? But what experience is, the *Critique of Pure Reason* sets forth. There can be no experience without an object given in intuition, to which the conceptions of the understanding are applied. But sensuous intuition or perception is the only form of intuition of which we are capable: intellectual, non-sensuous intuition is impossible to us.<sup>1</sup> For this reason the *Critique* lays down the principle, that nothing which is not phenomenon can be matter of experience.<sup>2</sup> This holds equally good of *inner* experience. It, too, gives us nothing but data of appearance—phenomenal data. Inner experience being a modification of our consciousness, can only take place in the order of time; in fact, it may be described as determination in time, that is, in the form to which the intuitions of the inner sense are subject—a form which is purely subjective.<sup>3</sup> So far, then, as the moral law is a matter of experience, it itself and the postulates derived from it are reduced to mere phenomena, to a mere mode of representation. Kant's intention, indeed, was to give it rather the position of a noumenon—a non-phenomenon; but in the very act of declaring it to be a noumenon, he shuts it out from becoming matter of experience, inasmuch as we have no experience of what does not appear. It is not at all clear, therefore, how we can have any knowledge whatever of the moral law as a fact of our reason.

It might, however, be objected that the moral law lies *à priori* in our mind, and is an *à priori* form of the practical reason, even as the categories are *à priori* forms of the theoretical intellect;<sup>4</sup> and that Kant, so far from regarding it as an object of experience, rather meant to represent it as preceding all experience; but even then the case would not

<sup>1</sup> *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* (Erdmann), p. 224.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 220.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 220.

<sup>4</sup> [A view taken by Ulrici in his interesting and too little noticed little work, entitled, *Glauben und Wissen*.—TR.]



be improved. For the question would arise afresh, How then can the moral law be a matter of knowledge to us at all? So far as it is to be thought at all, it must be thought in accordance with the categories of the understanding, by which all thought as such is regulated. But how could an *à priori* form of the practical intelligence be a fit object to which to apply the forms of the understanding in its theoretical function? We should in that case have to subsume form under form. It would not indeed involve a logical contradiction to embrace a formless content, if there be such a thing, under a form which *per se* was foreign to it; but how can that which itself is nothing but form accommodate itself to a foreign form without thus losing its own individual character—ceasing to be itself? Besides, another difficulty has to be faced. Kant teaches us in the *Critique* that the categories cannot be directly applied to sensuous intuitions, because the two are completely heterogeneous, and that a bridge is needed to connect the two. This bridge is the transcendental *schema*, which is a sort of *tertium quid* between conception and sensuous intuition. But there is no such connecting link between the categories of the understanding and the *à priori* form of the practical intellect. Intuition and conception are, after all, akin to each other, in so far as they are “constitutive elements” of the theoretical reason; whereas the moral law belongs to a totally different domain—the domain, namely, of volition and action, between which and the activity of the theoretical reason Kant draws a very sharp line of demarcation. How then can two things which can retain their specific characteristics only when they are recognised as belonging to disparate spheres, and are therefore kept separate from and opposed to each other, blend as it were of themselves into a unity? How can the moral law, which is exclusively a representation of the practical reason, become an object to which the categories of the understanding may be applied? And if this is impossible, then both the



moral law and the practical postulates thereof are shut out entirely from the domain of the knowable; nay more, they cease to be knowable and thinkable even for practical use alone.

Still further, the objects of the practical reason, as understood by Kant, are unquestionably non-phenomenal, things-in-themselves, noumena: according to the principles of the theoretical reason, therefore, the *categories cannot be applied to them*. He seeks, indeed, to justify the use which he makes of them in the practical philosophy, by the consideration, that because they are entirely drawn from the pure understanding, and for this very reason as to origin totally independent of sensuous conditions, they are not *per se* restricted to phenomena "save where a definite theoretical use is to be made of them."<sup>1</sup> But this non-sensuous origin of the categories was already an established fact for the theoretical philosophy. "As to origin, the categories are not grounded on sense"—so says expressly the *Critique of Pure Reason*.<sup>2</sup> And yet the theoretical philosophy limited the application of the categories to objects of sensuous intuition, and forbids any more extended employment of them, in that it declares that "they must not be used at all apart from sense."<sup>3</sup> Kant has therefore no right to deduce from the non-sensuous origin of the categories the admissibility of a contrary use. He lays down, it is true, by way of justifying the application of the categories to objects of the practical reason, the limitation, that they shall be used only for practical purposes, and not to promote theoretical knowledge. But even with this limitation they are applied in contradiction to the principles of the theoretical reason. For the very process of deduction of the categories shows that they are nothing but a combination of the manifold in intuition springing out of the understanding.<sup>4</sup> A

<sup>1</sup> *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft*, p. 97.

<sup>2</sup> *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* (Erdmann), p. 222.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 222. See Note 21 in Appendix.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* p. 97 f.

category is simply and solely the function, the synthesis, by which the manifold presented in intuition is reduced to the unity of apperception.<sup>1</sup> Accordingly Kant declares in the section on phenomena and noumena,<sup>2</sup> that "the categories are of significance solely in regard to the unity of our intuitions in space and time;" and "they are competent to determine this unity *à priori* by means of general connecting conceptions only, on account of the pure ideality of space and time." Where, however, he proceeds, this unity has no existence, that is, in the case of noumena, there no use whatever can be made of the categories, and they have no significance. If, then, the categories, apart from relation to intuitions, are altogether destitute of significance, it necessarily follows that they must remain totally without significance, even if one were to attempt to subsume under them the objects of the practical reason. The case will not be at all altered by the restriction that their use has only validity from a practical point of view. For the objects of the practical reason can serve no practical purpose without, at the very least, being thought; and inasmuch as nothing whatever can be thought without the categories, these said objects, too, must be thought by means of the categories. But if the categories have significance exclusively in reference to what is given in space and time, any application of them to that which lies outside intuition in space and time, in other words, to noumena, consequently to the objects of the practical reason, is quite out of the question. On the contrary, "their use, yea, their very significance, comes to an end." From this, however, follows further, that the moral law, with the postulates deduced from it, is something that withdraws itself entirely from human thought, in a word, is unthinkable. But to that which is unthinkable, it cannot be right to ascribe existence. If a thing is to exist, it must at the very least be thinkable, even if it cannot be fully comprehended. What is shown to be absolutely unthinkable is

<sup>1</sup> *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* (Erdmann), p. 123.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 225.

*ipso facto* relegated to the domain of *non-sens*. The principles of the theoretical reason thus compel us to deny existence to the entire domain of the practical reason, and to declare the same practical reason void of objects.

All this was as remote as possible from Kant's intention. His purpose rather was to rescue moral truth, and by dissociating it from theoretical knowledge to make it absolutely secure against the objections of the theoretical reason. But for this very reason he was compelled to transfer the forms under which the theoretical reason thinks to the objects of the practical reason. Had he not done so, thought in this domain would have come to an end ere it had well begun, and nothing would have remained but vague, unconscious feeling, which could not be made the subject of thoughtful contemplation at all, and which could not, for that very reason, assert its claim to reality under examination. Unless, then, every thought pertaining to this entire domain, yea, even every moral thought, is to dissolve away, the objects of the moral consciousness must be thinkable, nay more, thinkable by means of the categories; inasmuch as whatever is to be thought at all must needs be thought by their means. God and the free, immortal soul, for example, must be conceived as realities,—as substances, as causalities,—or they have no existence at all. But when Kant applies the categories to these objects of the practical reason, what becomes of them? The categories exist solely in our understanding; they are nowhere to be found outside of it. When they are applied to phenomena, the mind does not go out of itself, for phenomena are nothing but subjective ideas or representations. But what becomes of the objects of the moral consciousness when they are submitted to the categories of the understanding? They are supposed to be realities, substances, causalities. Now that which we represent to ourselves as reality, substance, casuality, is *ipso facto* no longer a thing-in-itself; were it a thing-in-itself, according to the principles of

the theoretical reason, it could be neither reality, substance, nor causality. But that which is not a thing-in-itself is a thing for us, that is, exists solely in our representation. So that we are forced to the conclusion that the objects of the practical reason are not objects in the transcendental sense, but merely *represented things* and *subjective contents of consciousness*.

Further still, the categories possess significance exclusively in relation to the conditions of sensibility.<sup>1</sup> "Reality," Kant tells us, "as contrasted with negation, can only be explained by thinking a time (as that in which all being is contained), which is either filled with something or empty. If I leave out the notion of permanence (which is an existence in all time), there remains in the conception of substance nothing but the logical notion" of a subject, which is nothing but subject, and is the predicate of nothing—an idea or representation "of which nothing more can be made, and from which no conclusion whatever can be deduced." "Of the conception of cause, if I leave out the time in which one thing follows on another, according to rule, nothing would remain in the pure category save that it is something or other from which the existence of something else may be inferred," and it would in that case be "impossible to draw any distinction whatever between cause and effect."<sup>2</sup> When, then, the objects of the practical reason are thought by means of the categories in question, they are *ipso facto* viewed as that which is given in time, that is, degraded to the position of mere ideas or representations, seeing that time is nothing more than the form of the intuition of the inner sense, and is not to be found in connection with things-in-themselves. What Kant himself declared thus comes to pass, namely: If principles which merely extend to objects of a possible experience are applied to that which cannot be a matter of experience, the latter are at once and in every case trans-

<sup>1</sup> *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* (Erdmann), p. 218.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 217.

formed into mere phenomena.<sup>1</sup> The fundamental antithesis which Kant had established between the merely phenomenal, that is, mere representations and moral and religious truth, namely, the noumenal, or thing-in-itself, and apart from which the entire domain of the practical reason would altogether lack features to distinguish it from that of the theoretical reason, is thus blotted out and done away with.

We are thus landed in the conclusion that the contrast instituted by Kant between the practical and the theoretical reason has not only no foundation in the principles of the latter, is not only *per se* unthinkable, and as a matter of fact impossible to carry out, but that the very attempt to realize it robs the domain of moral and religious knowledge of its value, and reduces it to a mere representation; nay more, aggravates the contrast to contradiction, inasmuch as the principles of the theoretical reason necessarily involve the denial of moral and religious truth.

The result of this attempt is accordingly the opposite of the one intended. Kant's intention was "to put an end for all future time to all the objections brought against morality and religion, after the Socratic manner, that is, by adducing the clearest proofs of the ignorance of their opponents." By exposing our inevitable ignorance with regard to things-in-themselves, by limiting theoretical knowledge to mere phenomena, and by the proof thence deducible that the theoretical reason is not in a position to decide anything with regard to objects of a supersensual nature, Kant imagined that he had "cut off the very fountain from which unbelief flows." He wished "to do away with knowledge in order to make room for faith."<sup>2</sup> Such was his intention. In reality, however, room is no longer left for faith. The realities of the moral and religious consciousness are set aside in advance by the principles of the theoretical reason. Kant himself declares

<sup>1</sup> *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* (Erdmann), p. 218.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Vorrede (Erdmann), p. xvii.

that if freedom could be demonstrated to the speculative reason to be unthinkable, it, and morality with it, must give place to the mechanical necessity of nature.<sup>1</sup> Accordingly, now that the practical reason is unable to maintain its ground in the presence of the theoretical, and has to be sacrificed to it, the only thing that remains is the mechanism of nature. But what is the mechanism of nature? Simply a sum-total of phenomena, that is, of subjective representations, which as such belongs exclusively to the domain of consciousness. On the one hand, therefore, the entire content of the practical philosophy has resolved itself into subjective presentation, and shown itself to be unthinkable; whilst, according to the alternative set before us by Kant, the only reality remaining is the mechanism of nature. But even this latter is unreal—is nothing but subjective presentation. Whithersoever then we turn, we find no fixed point of real existence, we sink helplessly in a bottomless abyss.

## CHAPTER IV.

### POSITIVE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CRITICAL PHILOSOPHY.

The edifice of the Kantian philosophy has fallen to ruin before our eyes, crushed beneath the weight of its own contradictions, and even the ruins themselves have disappeared in a bottomless abyss. In so far, therefore, the result of the Critical System is null. We have seen that it cannot possibly be the system of truth; that, on the contrary, its consequences are utter illusion and nihilism. By no means, however, does it follow from this that the Critical Philosophy has only a negative value. To the mighty effort of Kant's intellect belongs also a far-reaching positive significance. What this is, we will now endeavour to exhibit.

<sup>1</sup> *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, Vorrede (Erdmann), p. xvi.



"It is much easier," says Schopenhauer, "to point out the mistakes and errors in the production of a great mind than clearly and fully to unfold its worth. The mistakes are individual and isolated, and as such can be perfectly grasped; while it is of the very nature of genius to stamp its works with an excellence that can neither be fathomed nor exhausted. Such men, therefore, continue to be the never ageing teachers of generations and centuries."<sup>1</sup> Schopenhauer was quite right in pointing to the difficulties which beset him who, instead of contenting himself with merely exposing the mistakes of a great mind, is anxious to form a proper estimate of the positive merits of his work. We have no intention, however, of attempting a complete exposition of the significance of the "Critical Philosophy;" our purpose will be served by a general view. At the same time, we are not under the necessity of instituting the search after that significance as it were anew,—it will at once suggest itself as the natural consequence of our previous criticism, if that criticism be well founded.

§ 16. *The Critical Philosophy prepared the way for a higher and more adequate view of truth.*

A point of view from which to regard the subject offers itself at once. The Critical Philosophy so far as it professes to be a system of truth may be a failure, but it is justified so far as it has exposed the untruth of lower stages of knowledge, and has thus prepared the way for a higher and more adequate view of truth. It specially proves its possession of superior critical insight in relation alike to mere Empiricism and Dogmatism.

Empiricism, so far as it denies the possibility of any knowledge that is not based on sensuous experience, necessarily leads to sensualism and Materialism. If Empiricism

<sup>1</sup> Schopenhauer, *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*, Bd. i. p. 467, Leipzig 1844.

is right, it is not only the sensuous matter (or stuff) of experience that is brought from without, but also that combination of the manifold given in sense which constitutes it an experience. The unity and conjunction which characterize all knowledge are in that case not produced by ourselves within, but imported from without; the inward is nothing but the outward turned inside. But in that case our knowledge can have neither necessity nor certainty. If it is merely the result of outward impressions and sensations, then it is produced by causes that work mechanically and necessarily. But if so, any one kind of knowledge is as necessary as the kind which is opposed to it, no sort of knowledge can any longer pretend to be true as opposed to another sort that is false; all kinds are equally necessary, equally true. Error therefore has as much right and as full validity as truth; in other words, there is no longer either certainty or uncertainty, either truth or error.<sup>1</sup> Empiricism accordingly destroys itself, and its necessary consequence is scepticism,—of which fact, indeed, the course run by English philosophy from Bacon to Hume furnishes a historical demonstration.<sup>2</sup> In opposition to this position, Kant laid stress on the living spontaneity apart from which experience in the true sense is an impossibility. He maintained that the form by which the sensible manifold of experience is combined in experience is not infused into the living soul from without, but is internal to, connate with the mind; that consequently all experience is grounded in laws of intuition and thought which are immanent in mind prior to experience.<sup>3</sup> In his view, the ultimate principle of all experiential knowledge, after everything merely derivative or merely an accompaniment, everything merely external and material has been eliminated, is the *transcendental unity of apperception*,—that is, the transcendental egoity (*Ichheit*),

<sup>1</sup> See Ulrici, *Gott und die Natur*, 3rd ed., Leipzig 1875, p. 12.

<sup>2</sup> See Note 22 in Appendix.

<sup>3</sup> *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* (Erdmann), p. 114 f.

which itself is a self-contained act of consciousness, conditioned by nothing outside of itself—an act which by its very nature cannot be superinduced upon a man from without, but in which the human mind acts with pure spontaneity.<sup>1</sup> For the ego owes, so to speak, its egoity to its own act, and apart therefrom could not possess egoity at all. The action, therefore, by which the ego posits itself is one of formal absoluteness, and in that act the human spirit vindicates itself as an image and reflection of that absolute spontaneity with which God posits Himself. But it is in the necessity of this original act of consciousness—an act without which it would not be itself—that the necessity of the categories is grounded. They are not merely reflections of the laws of the cosmos, but the laws according to which we are necessitated to think the world in its totality; they are living acts of the autonomous mind, and their truth and certainty is an original one, because it is bound up with, involved in, the relation of mind to itself, or in the internal relations of consciousness. Their truth and certainty is not dependent on anything outside the mind; on the contrary, it precedes everything that presents itself to us from without as an object of knowledge; in short, truth and certainty would have no existence for us if reason were not the principle of its own truth and certainty. Reason, therefore, in the last resort, draws from itself the certainty of its own laws.

§ 17. *The Kantian philosophy further established the originality of the moral law.*

Kant proves himself, further, to be a genuine and great thinker in another way, namely, by doing for the moral law in the "Practical Philosophy" what he had done for the theoretical laws of knowledge in his theoretical philosophy, namely, demonstrating its originality, its oneness with the very nature

<sup>1</sup> *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* (Erdmann), p. 115 f.

of mind. Empiricism and materialism, on the contrary, represent even the moral law as imported into or generated in man by education and custom, and have therefore never been able to account for the necessity which characterizes it. Education and custom are competent, indeed, of themselves to produce in man a certain habit of conformity to the moral law ; but no education and no compulsory measures can beget in him the feeling of duty or of respect for the moral law. This is a feeling which no motives lying outside the law itself can generate ; it always absolutely presupposes itself. No rapport of intelligence could ever exist between the educator and the pupil, unless the latter could be assumed to be naturally endowed with a capability of distinguishing between that which should and that which should not be. This moral feeling may be misled or neglected, and, as a consequence, degenerate or become atrophied ; but never can it be imported into man from without ; it can only be awakened and developed in him so far as it is already a part of his nature. Once developed, it must be able consciously and clearly to look at itself, lay hold of itself, and rise to the conception of itself. Kant therefore was right when he taught that the categorical imperative of duty was rooted in the essential nature of the human mind.

§ 18. *Another merit of the Critical Philosophy was the overthrow of Dogmatism.*

He was relatively right, too, in his relation to the *Dogmatism* of the school of Wolff. The error of that system did not lie, indeed, in the assumption with which it started, that the truth of thought and of being must be identical. To call that in question is to renounce all idea of knowledge, by declaring knowledge of the truth impossible. At the same time, the mode in which dogmatism and rationalism endeavoured to establish the truth of supersensuous ideas was totally inade-

quate. They went to work as though the ideas of the reason were the product of their metaphysical syllogisms. Kant showed that these syllogisms are incapable of performing what Dogmatism expected them to perform. It endeavoured also to determine the ideas of the reason according to the abstract forms of the understanding, by means of a one-sided application of the principle of contradiction and of the excluded middle, —a method opposed to the living and infinite nature of their contents; for where abstract thought sees only mutually exclusive alternatives, life and infinitude allow the one to be as possible as the other, or both to be capable of co-existence. Kant showed that the ideas of reason cannot be determined after this manner. What, in fact, his *Critique* effected was the overthrow of the old metaphysic.

But this negative result involved the demand that there should be no standing still; that, on the contrary, new ground should be broken, new methods tried, with a view to regaining the lost possessions of reason. Kant's attempt to provide the ideas of reason with a foundation in the moral consciousness introduced a dualism, created a rent in the mental life of man, which must not only prove itself essentially intolerable and untenable, but also as surely lead to the denial of the ideas of reason themselves, as did the mode of establishing them adopted by the older Rationalism.

§ 19. *Kant's philosophy involved further the principle of a new mode of thought.*

Negatively and positively alike, therefore, Kant gave the impulse to a new shaping of philosophy. But this was by no means all that he accomplished. The significance of his work lay not merely in his antagonism to Empiricism and Dogmatism; on the contrary, the position taken up by him in undertaking to criticize these two tendencies, contained within itself the *principle of a new mode of thought*, a principle

which in the very moment of emergence transcended the previous antitheses just referred to. The Critical Philosophy awakened the mind to questions and problems which could not but stir it to its deepest depths, and open up to it new paths. It was not merely a revolution within the schools, and affecting abstract doctrines, but aroused controversies and brought to light antagonisms which concern every domain of human life and knowledge, and are of universal, all-embracing significance. From it dates a great epoch in the history of the human mind generally; with it a decisive crisis of human consciousness was inaugurated. There was in it a world-transforming element, the principle of a radical change in the whole of human knowledge, and consequently of the various aspects of human society. The explanation of this crisis must be sought in the character of the period at which it arose. Hegel tells us that a philosophical system embodies the consciousness which its own age has of itself. Although this dictum cannot be admitted in the absolute form given to it by its author, it is quite true that no genuine philosophy is isolated; it can only be understood in the light of necessary tendencies and currents of the time, to which it lends conscious expression; it is, so to speak, the very breath and spirit of the age, seized in its passage, and lit up into consciousness, whereby the objective historical current is put in possession of the ideal truth which lay concealed within it; or otherwise expressed, philosophy gives utterance to the ideal truth, of which the actual life or an age is but the imperfect or misrepresentative expression. Kant, too, was, of course, not an isolated figure. In his philosophy, a general principle that was working itself out in the dominant tendencies of the time came to consciousness of itself. The nature of this principle we shall have little difficulty in determining.

The human spirit has two fundamental characteristics. As created it is conditioned; and as conditioned it is not pure activity, pure spontaneity, but of its very essence stands in a



relation of dependence and receptivity to influences from without which are necessary to its spiritual growth and development, — influences from God and from the material and supersensuous worlds. It stands in constant need of these influences; without them, the possibilities which lie in it cannot attain to development and actualization. But man is not merely receptive, passively-receptive; not only is he sensible of oneness with the objective world and God; there is in him also a principle of spontaneity, autonomy, rationality, in virtue of which he is a centre to himself, and can possess and control himself. If this latter side of man's constitution dissociates itself from the receptive, the result is a perverted, sickly *unnature*, which may even become antagonistic to Deity. Considered in itself, however, the principle of spontaneity is the higher principle in man—that wherein lies his resemblance to God; that which constitutes him the image of the divine absoluteness. Only by the maintenance of equilibrium and harmony between these two factors is it possible to preserve human life and knowledge in their healthy and normal condition.

In the course of the last century the living spirit had fled from society; the religious and scientific traditions of humanity had dwindled away; the objective forces, institutions, and organizations of Church and State had become formal, mechanical, rigid, unliving; the human mind had lost its living rapport and receptivity for the higher world, and become incapable of appreciating the original significance of the conditions and ideas that had been handed down to it; nay, and more, it was itself lamed and atrophied. What then more natural and necessary than that the organic vitality still remaining should react; that the principle of spontaneity should rise in rebellion against this stale environment with its foreign and heterogeneous elements; and that it should endeavour to rid itself of it and to reorganize its life and world afresh in accordance with the law of its own nature? For surely it

is a necessity for living organisms to cast off and out whatever is dead and foreign to themselves; and this procedure is the negative condition of the continuance of their life and development. A spirit of opposition and free criticism awakened, which directed itself not only against existing institutions and relations, but against the ruling ideas. Religious doctrines, in particular, were remodelled in a rationalistic sense, that is, in the direction of deism and naturalism. The *Critique of Pure Reason* was Kant's funeral sermon for this species of rationalism. He refuted Rationalism, it is true; but he did so by consummating it, by bringing it to full development. For the principle which was working in Rationalism, yea, in the entire critical and oppositional tendencies of the age,—the principle of the spontaneity and autonomy of the human mind,—this very principle was fully and consciously recognised by Kant and Fichte, and both of them did their utmost to carry it out to its fullest theoretical consequences. Here, then, we have the place of the Critical Philosophy in the history of the world. It was a result and manifestation of the energetic revolt of free autonomous mental activity against a soulless externalism which had lost all vital relation to the human spirit. As such, it was a radical principle, at once of disintegration and destruction, and a principle of revival and rejuvenescence.

We have thus drawn the lines within which lie the special work, significance, and importance of Kant's philosophy. As a historical moment, as a turning-point in the progress of the human mind, it is great. But to regard it as the system of truth itself, is to put on it a strain which it is unable to bear, and violently to wrench it from its historical connection.

§ 20. *A new and grand process of development took its rise in the Critical Philosophy.*

In the development which followed on Kant and Fichte, we find the human mind, though starting from an idealistic principle which had asserted for itself exclusive truth as against every form of objective existence, recognising at length, in the objective universe, its own essential nature. The reason immanent in things themselves was again brought to light, and there dawned on the human intellect the idea of an universal life-organization, with its infinite antitheses, and the ever new unities which they constituted. From this point of view, moreover, fresh insight was gained into the connection between the sensuous and the supersensuous world, in that the newly-discovered unity of mind and nature pointed backwards to the common root of both, and thence to the ultimate principles of all being and knowledge. This is, in brief, the course of development run by the German mind on its way from transcendental and subjective idealism, through the philosophy of identity, to Schelling's positive philosophy and the grand conceptions of Franz von Baader. A path was thus opened on which it was possible for the human mind to advance to a ripeness and maturity which would qualify it for making its own by free reflection, in a fuller sense and in larger compass, that which it had previously held in a naïve and unreflective manner; as well as for combining the great antitheses through which it had passed upon its intellectual journey in a new and higher consciousness,—a consciousness in which should be blended the living realism of the ancient world and the inwardness and ideality of the Christian religion.

The Critical Philosophy was a stage through which it was necessary for the human mind to pass ere it could reach this high stage of development.

At the present moment, indeed, there is little understanding

for the profound and fundamental philosophical ideas of Baader and the later Schelling,—ideas which may be regarded as an attempt to conduct the emptied mind of the age back to ultimate principles, or, so to speak, to the primal thoughts of humanity. For this reason it is usual to represent the development of philosophy since Kant as reaching its culmination in Hegel. But even if this were actually the case, it would have to be conceded, that when once Kant and Fichte had set up the Ego as the principle of the entire phenomenal world, it became imperatively necessary to justify the position thus assigned to the Ego by actually deriving the world of phenomena from it. This necessity is the logical secret of Schelling in succession to, and advance upon, Fichte. He undertook the derivation postulated, and in doing so showed that the external phenomenal world and the Ego, with its subjective determinations and its inner world, are but momenta of one and the same unity. That unity, however, could no longer be regarded as merely the subjective Ego, but must be viewed as the absolute identity, as the point of indifference of the subjective and objective, in which are posited with equal independence the two sides, namely, the real and the ideal, spirit and nature.<sup>1</sup> But as all determinateness, reflexion, and distinction remained external to this absolute identity, it could only become the object of an intellectual intuition. In opposition to this “knowledge of mere substance without conceptions,” Hegel pressed the demand for scientific intelligibility and mediation.<sup>2</sup> The absolutely one cannot, he maintained, be mere substance or distinctionless identity. Whatever lacks distinction and determination is in itself incapable of movement, and beyond the reach of intelligence. The absolutely one is rather subject,<sup>3</sup> that is, conception (*Begriff*), which distinguishes

<sup>1</sup> Schelling, *Werke*, Zweite Abth., Bd. i. p. 369 ff.

<sup>2</sup> Hegel, *Die Phänomenologie des Geistes*, pp. xii., xv.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. xx.

itself from itself, and knows itself as all being. Thus defined, the system of identity passed over into the absolute idealism of Hegel. But the criticism of absolute idealism shows the truth in it to be the idea of a knowledge in which, as one of the Epigones (ἐπίγονοι—after-born ones) of the classical period of German philosophy has put it, reason has arrived at insight into the fact that its own inner substance is essentially one with objective actuality, or comprehends itself in the unity of its own inner truth with objective reality.<sup>1</sup>

However variously the development of philosophy since Kant may be regarded, it is quite certain that, as the subjective idealism of Fichte was merely the Kantian Criticism carried to its legitimate issues; as, further, the philosophy of identity necessarily resulted from the Fichtean idealism; and as, still further, the absolute idealism of Hegel was a logical development from the philosophy of identity,—it is quite certain, we say, that the Critical Philosophy of Kant had only a transitional significance as a preparation for, and introduction to, higher and riper phases of philosophical knowledge; such, at all events, is the lesson of the recent history of philosophy. It necessarily presupposes Kant, and would be unintelligible without him; but it is also a continuous refutation of Kant, whose system, therefore, is thus relegated to the past, and treated as a temporary stage of thought, which the march of speculation has now left for ever behind.

§ 21. *The principle of the Critical Philosophy unfit to serve as the basis of a philosophical system.*

An examination of the contents of the Critical Philosophy further shows that its own underlying principle, as defined and applied therein, is not of a nature to serve as the basis

<sup>1</sup> Karl Phil. Fischer, *Grundzüge des Systems der Philosophie*, Bd. i. 48. *Speculative Charakteristik und Kritik des Hegel'schen Systems*, p. 590.

and principle of a philosophical system. The real kernel of the Critical System is the principle of the spontaneity and autonomy of the human mind; but the principle, though the vital spring of the whole, is not as yet clearly understood—its essential nature and implications are not fully grasped. Owing to the false exclusiveness with which it is held, it is further marked by abstractness and onesidedness. Kant isolates the subject from all real being. The latter is the thing-in-itself to which the subject has entirely lost relationship. And not only as regards the realities of the sensuous world is the subject isolated, but also as regards the super-sensuous world; and the original connection between it and God is so completely severed, that it is only able to assume His existence by means of a postulate, laid down after the investigation of its own nature and constitution is completed. We have seen, however, that when subject and object are separated in this abstract manner, it becomes impossible to retain our hold on any reality at all; and that we are logically driven to deny, not only the real existence of things, but also the existence of God. Nay more, the Ego cannot then retain its hold on itself—on its own being—on its own reality; it is reduced to one of its own ideas or representations or impressions. The autonomy of the human mind which the Critical Philosophy sought to establish has thus become a wretched parody of itself—a hollow figure—an empty nothing.

In looking back, therefore, on the vast undertaking of Kant's mighty intellect, one can scarcely at last avoid the feeling of being the witness of a tragedy. Held in the grip of a necessary principle, he is driven onward by it upon an inevitable path; but whilst he supposes himself to be engaged in establishing the principle in all its aspects and bearings, his labour is really spent—unconsciously, unintentionally spent—in demonstrating its futility and exhibiting its untruth. This is nothing else than the tragedy of the modern



mind itself in its struggle to assert for itself a false autonomy : —in the very measure in which it seeks to lay in itself its own foundations, in that same measure does it labour at undermining them. And so far as the *Critique of Pure Reason* is the ground-plan of this false development, so far must this inner contradiction be allowed to constitute its proper substance.

The intellectual work done by the Critical Philosophy can never be forgotten ; but owing to its obviously negative result, it is incapable of a revival. The principle of spontaneity and autonomy, which had been subjectively swaying the mind of the entire century, was now lifted into a position of exclusive validity and dominance. Hitherto it had been more or less played and coquetted with ; or, at all events, only half-heartedly applied. In the Critical Philosophy it was taken seriously and carried out consistently. There, accordingly, it exhibited itself as it was in and by itself, in its nakedness, stripped of everything external and heteronomic ; it concentrated itself in itself, and proceeded to put its powers to the test. It was asserted and expounded in all its trenchancy, and applied in all its breadth and length. Now, therefore, must its true character be brought to light : now must the human mind learn how far it is able to go with the material supplied by its own self-consciousness, its own nature. And what was the result ? The refutation of the starting-point. It turned out that the isolated subject is unable to accomplish, to attain to anything ; that its isolation, therefore, is an essential falsehood and sheer abstraction ; that its truth is found, not in isolation, but in unity with God and the world ; and that this unity is the condition of the maintenance of its own autonomy.

Whilst, then, our negative criticism of the Critical Philosophy has shown it to be characterized by persistent contradictions and impossibilities, and convicted it of leading necessarily to bare illusionism and nihilism, our positive

estimate of it proves that even its own motive principle—the principle in which lie its power and truth—was falsely viewed; and that it is just this error that caused the principle to work for its own subversion.

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## SECTION SECOND.

### THE NEO-KANTIAN PHILOSOPHY.

#### CHAPTER I.

##### RETURN TO KANT.

“Back to Kant,”—such is at present the chosen watchword throughout wide circles of philosophical inquiry. It is thought that the point of view of the philosopher of Königsberg cannot really yet be with full justice described as a thing of the past; it is maintained, on the contrary, that there is every reason for exploring the depths of Kantism, as a philosophical system, with the earnestness and thoroughness which have hitherto almost exclusively characterized the study of the system of Aristotle.<sup>1</sup> The assimilation of the Kantian theory of the world (*Weltanschauung*), we are informed, is the task which embraces within itself all the problems of modern culture.<sup>2</sup> And the zeal with which the Kantian philosophy is at the present time being studied, expounded, and debated, is worthy of the conviction thus proclaimed. Not only is there a young school of Kantians, both in a narrower and wider sense, but those also whose purpose it is to follow other lines find it necessary first, as it were, to reckon with Kant, and specially to justify their departure from his principles and methods.

<sup>1</sup> So A. Lange, *Geschichte des Materialismus*, 2 Buch, 3 Aufl. 1877, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Cohen in the biographical preface to the 4th edition of Lange's *Geschichte des Materialismus*, p. viii.

Even the scientific investigators of nature, when they become dissatisfied with materialism, evince an inclination towards a theory of the world which, in very essential features, agrees with that of Kant.<sup>1</sup> During the last twenty years more has been written about Kant alone than about his predecessors and successors together. Indeed, the literature of Neo-Kantism has increased to such proportions, that one hears it remarked that an individual investigator can no longer master it unless he takes it for his special department and task.<sup>2</sup> According to Vaihinger, even in 1881 there existed no fewer than two hundred works specially devoted to Kant.<sup>3</sup> He has become the subject, too, of a most thorough historico-philological criticism. Kantian philology now embraces numerous volumes, and scholars begin to speak of a specifically Kantian erudition, just as there is an Aristotelian erudition; and as, till the close of the Middle Ages, there were Thomist Doctors.<sup>4</sup> And as a sort of halo of sacred infallibility once gathered around Aristotle, so also at the present day is it gathering around Kant. Fichte, Schelling, Hegel, and Schopenhauer, we are assured, are perishable—the Critical Philosophy alone is immortal. It may be corrected or amended; superseded—never!<sup>5</sup> But even thus, as it would seem, Kant is not treated with due respect. Who gives authority to correct and amend him? The reviewer of a *Criticism of Kant's Critique*, published in 1877, uttered an emphatic warning against any such impertinence.<sup>6</sup> "This is

<sup>1</sup> Lange, *passim*, 2 Buch, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Carl du Prel in the journal *Die Gegenwart*, edited by Zolling, for 1882, No. 12.

<sup>3</sup> Vaihinger, *Commentar zu Kant's Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, Bd. i., 1881, p. 13.

<sup>4</sup> K. G. in the *Allgemeine Zeitung* for 1882, No. 81.

<sup>5</sup> So Karl Grün in the *Allgemeine Zeitung* for 1882, Supplement, No. 157.

<sup>6</sup> See the *Jenaer Literaturzeitung* for 1877, No. 40. The occasion was furnished by an article in Supplement No. 3 to the *Stimmen aus Maria-Laach* for 1877, written by T. Pesch, and entitled, "Die Haltlosigkeit der modernen Wissenschaft. Eine Kritik der Kant'schen Kritik für weitere Kreise" (The Untenableness of Modern Science. A Criticism of Kant's *Critique* for General Readers).

what criticizing Kant instead of sitting at his feet," says he, "leads to;—a Jesuit, appealing for support to Kant's own disciples, declares him to be a child of hell;" whereas "an actual, serious, prolonged study of the great Königsberg thinker would lead to the conviction that his real greatness rests on the fact that he has never contradicted himself." Nor is this by any means an isolated opinion. Another Kantian, one of the leaders of the Neo-Kantian school, has delivered the following judgment: "If, as many at the present day are convinced, philosophy is only to be revived by means of Kant, the first requisite is insight into the fact that he is a *genius*. When that is attained, one may fairly expect that there will be an end of fancying ourselves wiser than he, and we shall learn to wait with patience till we have worked our way with seriousness and zeal through his difficulties, and are able to range freely through the entire edifice of his system, and look at each part in its relation to the whole." The result of such work will be to set at rest all doubts as to his self-consistency.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, the common assumption with which Kantians now start is, that the object of their studies is to be understood as a unity marred by no contradictions.<sup>2</sup>

§ 22. *The strangeness of the Kant-cultus which has thus been established.*

At first sight this Cultus of Kant must needs strike one with surprise. It is intelligible enough, indeed, that at a time in which the authority of the latest great philosophical systems has been long broken down, and no new one has yet taken their place, the irrepressible yearning after philosophical knowledge should seek satisfaction in an eclectic

<sup>1</sup> Cohen, *Kant's Theorie der Erfahrung*, 3rd ed. Berlin 1835, Preface to 1st edition, p. ix.

<sup>2</sup> A. Lange, *Geschichte des Materialismus*, 3rd ed. p. 130, note 35.

recurrence to earlier systems: especially while there is a lack of independent productivity. But why should the cry be, "Back to Kant!" when the greatest conceivable antagonism would seem to exist between his apriorism and idealism, with its reduction of the entire world of phenomena to a mere idea or representation of the human mind, and the realistic tendency of the present day, with its contrary effort to show that mind is simply one of the phenomena of the life of nature? Examined more carefully, however, this seeming contrariety soon disappears. Kant does undoubtedly teach that we have an *à priori* knowledge; but the said knowledge is purely formal. Nothing is given *à priori* but the *forms* of intuition and thought. The *Critique* never breathes a syllable of *contents* possessed by mind *à priori*. The forms in question derive their contents solely from sensuous experience. "But if *à priori* knowledge is merely formal and therefore void of content; and if the contents of knowledge are supplied exclusively by sensuous experience: then the latter is the chief thing, the kernel, the proper substance of all our knowledge:"—philosophy, accordingly, resist as it may, sinks down to the level of empiricism, sensualism, materialism. For there is no knowledge save of that which is derived from the world of sense. Without sensuous content it is totally empty, a hollow form, a mere shadow.<sup>1</sup> Justification is supplied, therefore, to the empirical tendency of the present day by the idealistic philosophy of Kant—a justification, too, which must be all the more welcome, because, by accepting Kant, it rescues for itself a remnant of idealism. For there is an undoubted shrinking from full and thoroughgoing materialism—materialism of the dogmatic kind; it only wants materialism as a principle of investigation, as a maxim of research, with a view to the explanation of the actual sensuous world. Two things seem to be secured by

<sup>1</sup> Franz Hoffmann in the first volume of Baader's *Sämmtliche Werke*, p. xlii.

Kant's doctrine of the thing-in-itself, namely, first, the recognition of a something lying beyond and back of the phenomenal as a necessary assumption; and, on the other hand, the denial of its knowableness. The thing-in-itself signifies a region in which boundless room is left for the free play of the idealistic and religious tendencies of the human mind, whilst the natural sciences can work on completely secure from any sort of interference. For a considerable time the German mind overwrought itself in philosophical speculation, and as a natural consequence this period of metaphysical intoxication was followed by one of sad sobriety, the culmination of which may perhaps be fixed in the sixth decennium of the present century. Almost the only sign then discernible that an interest was still taken in philosophical questions was the controversy that raged anent materialism. Under such circumstances, it cannot be matter of surprise that the Critical Philosophy, with the solid basis which it appears to give to human knowledge, and the clear boundaries and firm self-restraint which it imposes on human inquiry, should be regarded as a deliverance from that which had come to be looked down upon as the phantastic play of wild speculation, and as a logical romanticism incongruous with the modern spirit; especially as at the same time it seemed to cut the ground from under the pretensions of materialism.

We can understand, therefore, why the appearance of *Liebmann's* work, entitled, *Kant und die Epigonen*,<sup>1</sup> the refrain of whose arguments, recurring at the close of every section, was "we must return to Kant," constituted a sort of epoch; and the demand thus formulated by him became a watchword, which by general consent was accepted as suited to the time and occasion. It was a seed-corn which fell into well-prepared soil; a cry which was raised at the right moment, and

<sup>1</sup> Liebmann, *Kant und die Epigonen* (Kant and the 'Επίγονοι or Afterborn Ones—Successors, with a suggestion of inferiority), Stuttgart 1865, pp. 110, 215, etc.



to which, therefore, heed was at once given. About the same time *Kuno Fischer's* masterly exposition of Kant's system gave a strong impulse to a renewed study of his works. *Jürgen Bona Meyer* also took part in the work of showing the significance of Kant's investigations for the present day. Now, too, for the first time, general interest began to be directed to the philosophy of Schopenhauer, whose points of contact with Kant, and demand that his works should be read and studied, set not a few on the desired track. The investigations of natural science; in particular, the theory of the subjective nature of sense-perception at which physiologists arrived, appeared further to lend a certain experimental sanction to some of Kant's fundamental thoughts.<sup>1</sup> And so it came to pass that he again became the man of the day. Publications on him shot up like mushrooms, and soon a considerable literature rose into existence. To not a few pushing intellects, indeed, his philosophy seemed to offer a refuge to which they betook themselves, glad to find shelter anywhere.<sup>2</sup> But the popularity which greeted the cry "Back to Kant," cannot be due solely to individual inclinations or needs;—it arose from the fact of its falling in with the dominant tendency of the time.<sup>3</sup>

It was the realistic and experimental bent of the age that allied itself with Kant. But this was not all. Another moment is closely connected with it—the prevailing aversion to metaphysics and theology is but the reverse of which this empirical mode of thought is the obverse. The aversion in question related not merely to exaggerations of the importance of metaphysical inquiries, but to metaphysics as such. Men who devoted themselves with enthusiasm to the investigation of the most trivial material phenomena, turned away with indifference from God and divine things. To such a

<sup>1</sup> See Helmholtz, *Ueber das Sehen des Menschen*, Leipzig 1885, pp. 19, 40 f.

<sup>2</sup> As Laas remarks in his *Kant's Analogien der Erfahrung*, Berlin 1876, p. 2. [A few sentences relevant solely to Germany are omitted here.—Tr.]

<sup>3</sup> See Note 23 in Appendix.

state of mind nothing, of course, could be more welcome than Kant's supposed proof that, according to the very constitution of our intellectual faculties, we can know nothing of that which lies beyond the world of sense. Franz von Baader's remark is still applicable, that the ultimate reason why Kant's doctrine was heralded as so profoundly wise, is to be chiefly found in that constitutional, primitive and incurable God-blindness which he himself asserted;<sup>1</sup> for the world has no more ardent desire than to receive the tranquillizing assurance that it may remain uncertain with regard to God and divine things. When David Strauss summed up the dominant empirical and materialistic theories in his book, *The Old and the New Faith*, men professed to be not a little shocked, and were, on the contrary, loud in their praises of Dubois-Reymond's celebrated discourse on the *Limits of Natural Knowledge* as a great Kantian performance. But these very praises revealed the prevalent aversion to questions of a transcendental nature. The man who, either in the one or in the other way, either negatively or positively, sets himself to lift the veil, is sure to be regarded as a nuisance. "Observe the profoundest silence with regard to God and divine things"—was the injunction given by Goethe when the charge of atheism was brought against Fichte. It may be regarded as the typical expression of the mental attitude which dominates wide contemporary circles.

It is better not to speak of God and divine things, because, as they say, nothing can be known about them. The absolute lies out beyond human ken. But if knowledge of the absolute is impossible, equally impossible is it for us to attain to absolute truth. We shall have to content ourselves with piling up an infinite mass of disconnected details. What truth may be as such, absolute truth, is a question to which it is vain to seek an answer. Hand in hand with the prevailing aversion to metaphysics and theology there necessarily

<sup>1</sup> Franz von Baader's *Sämmtliche Werke*, Bd. i. p. 4.

goes, therefore, a tendency to eliminate everything absolute, everything that is unconditionally valid, from our view of things, and to rest satisfied with merely relative truth, with what is true for us; in a word, to imprint on all knowledge the stamp of relativity. It has been remarked that the present generation of writers is a good deal pervaded by the spirit of the sophist and special pleader. Whilst it has developed a perfect virtuosity in the art of expounding and making clear the subjects of which it treats, it is in danger of losing the organ for the absolutely valid, the absolutely good and true. And this is easily explicable. Surrender the idea of reaching absolute truth, and the idea of an absolute standard for the judgment of finite things must also be surrendered. One might almost imagine that we were entering on a new era of sophistry, in which everything that the human mind has hitherto counted fixed and essentially valid will become fluid and relative; the entire real world will resolve itself into seeming, and the Protagorean principle that "man is the measure of all things" be well-nigh universally accepted. Now the subjective philosophy of Kant, with its anthropocentric point of view, seems to lend to this tendency to the merely relative and probable an appearance of exclusive scientific warrant.<sup>1</sup>

The causes thus touched on enable us to understand, not only how the demand for a return to Kant came to be raised, but also why, when raised, it was received with such remarkable favour and awakened so loud an echo in the minds of contemporaries. If our diagnosis of the situation is correct, it must be clear that the return to Kant has been to some extent conditioned and furthered by interests that are very foreign or even contradictory to the spirit of a true philosophy.

<sup>1</sup> See Note 24 in Appendix.

## CHAPTER II.

## CRITICISM OF THE NEO-KANTIAN PHILOSOPHY.

The question that now awaits consideration is this, whether philosophy, by returning to Kant, has succeeded in laying for itself a fresh and firm foundation; and whether the Kantian philosophy, in the new form given it by those who propose to instal it as the system of the present, is better grounded and more self-consistent than it was, in the shape which it received at the hands of its original author.

For the purpose of this inquiry it is not necessary that we should review the entire recent literature of the subject. Especially needless is this with the department known as the *Kant-Philology*, the sole object of which has been to interpret Kant. Nor do we need to consider works whose sole aim is to throw a fuller light on, or to correct this and the other point in Kant's system. We may pass by unnoticed not only the depreciatory judgment pronounced by Kuno Fischer<sup>1</sup> on this modern Kant-Philology, and the acquiescent remarks of Arnoldt<sup>2</sup> and, Witte;<sup>3</sup> but also what has been advanced in its favour from the other side.<sup>4</sup> For our purpose it will be sufficient to examine a writer who may be regarded as the most prominent leader in the present effort to rehabilitate the Kantian philosophy; especially as he has done his best to reproduce and develope the entire system in the form suited

<sup>1</sup> Kuno Fischer, *Geschichte der neueren Philosophie*, Bd. iii., 3rd revised edition, pp. 546, 557.

<sup>2</sup> Emil Arnoldt, *Kant nach Kuno Fischer's neuer Darstellung*, Königsberg 1882, p. 28.

<sup>3</sup> Dr. Johannes Witte, *Kuno Fischer's Behandlung der Geschichte der Philosophie und sein Verhältniss zur Kantphilologie*. *Altpreussische Monatsschrift*. Neue Folge, Band xx. 1883, p. 140 ff.

<sup>4</sup> Jürgen Bona Meyer, Witte, Paulsen, Riehl, Stadler, Thiele, Folchert, Laas, Krause, Göring, Bärenbach, Lassowitz, Volkelt, and others, have either contributed to the clearing up of difficulties, or have further developed some of the points of his system; but the scope of this work does not require us to estimate the results of their labours. See also Note 25 in Appendix.

to the present state of investigation; and has proclaimed it to be in this renovated shape the philosophy of the present day. We refer to Fr. Alb. Lange, the author of the *History of Materialism and Critique of its Significance in the Present Day*.<sup>1</sup> In the opinion of a scientific reviewer,<sup>2</sup> this work owes its chief importance, apart from the great mass of scientific material worked up in it, to the circumstance of its gathering all the rays of modern knowledge into one focus more effectively than had ever been even approximately done before, frequently as it had been attempted. By the Neo-Kantians themselves Lange is regarded as an apostle of the Kantian view of the world, and as the head and leader of the new movement; the history in question, too, is esteemed the most important philosophical performance of the present day.<sup>3</sup> A like estimate of his position in the Neo-Kantian movement is pronounced among opponents of Neo-Kantianism by Hartmann and O. Pfleiderer.<sup>4</sup> If then, in the judgment alike of friend and foe, he is the most prominent master of the new school, we ought to find in his work the most characteristic expression of its fundamental tendencies, the clearest exposition of its aims, and the best demonstration of what it is able to accomplish.<sup>5</sup>

§ 23. *Lange, the chief representative of the Neo-Kantian tendency, characteristically sets aside the realistic factor or thing-in-itself left standing by Kant.*

It is decidedly and at once significant of the direction which Lange's thought takes, that he sets aside the realistic

<sup>1</sup> The first edition appeared in 1866; a fourth popular edition, without index and observations, in 1882.

<sup>2</sup> *Beilage* (Supplement) zur *Allgemeinen Zeitung*, 1875, No. 231.

<sup>3</sup> Vaihinger, *Hartmann, Dühring und Lange*, 1876, pp. 8 and 217, note 80.

<sup>4</sup> Eduard von Hartmann, *Neukantianismus Schopenhauerianismus und Hegelianismus*, Zweite erweiterte Auflage, 1877, p. 19. O. Pfleiderer, *Religionsphilosophie auf geschichtlicher Grundlage*, Bd. i. p. 501.

<sup>5</sup> See Note 26 in Appendix.

factor which Kant's theory of knowledge endeavoured to retain, and without which Kant would have been unable to effect an entrance into his own system. In the very first edition of his work, Lange expressed his assent to the objection raised long ago, that if an inference is drawn to things-in-themselves behind phenomena, the conception of causality, which, like all the other categories, is valid solely in the domain of phenomena, becomes transcendent. He took for granted that the "armour of the system" was fatally pierced by this objection; and accordingly undertook to amend it at this place.<sup>1</sup> Cohen, however, replied that this objection can be nullified, if we interpret Kant as meaning that "the absolute thing-in-itself, the presumed cause of the phenomenal," is to be regarded as a creature of our understanding, and as an inevitable transcendental delusive seeming.<sup>2</sup> In consequence of Cohen's criticism, Lange reconsidered his position with regard to the *Critique of Pure Reason*, and in the second edition of his work confessed that what he had propounded as a correction of Kant's system was really Kant's own proper opinion. The thing-in-itself is simply a limitative or regulative conception. "We do not know whether things-in-themselves exist. All we know is that the consistent application of the laws of thought conducts us to the conception of an entirely problematical something, which we assume to be the cause of phenomena as soon as we recognise the fact that our world can only be a world of ideas or representations." The assumption of a *mundus intelligibilis* is not "transcendental knowledge, but merely the ultimate consequence of the use of the understanding in the judgment of what is given." The antithesis between the thing-in-itself and phenomena is a creation of our own intellect. "The true nature of things, the final ground of phenomena, is not only unknown to us, but the very conception thereof is nothing more nor less than the

<sup>1</sup> A. Lange, *Geschichte des Materialismus*, 1st ed. p. 267.

<sup>2</sup> Cohen, *Kant's Theorie der Erfahrung*, Berlin 1871 (1st ed.), p. 251 ff.



last progeny of an antithesis posited by our organization, with regard to which we are ignorant whether it has any significance whatever relatively to that which is outside of us."<sup>1</sup>

The thing-in-itself has thus ceased to be a factor in our knowledge, a coefficient of experience; it has no share whatever in that which is the object of knowledge; the position of matters is not even this,—that though things which are outside of us, and exist independently of our consciousness, cannot become objects of human knowledge, they do exert an influence on the process by which knowledge is generated. What Lange maintains is that the notion of the thing-in-itself arises in our mind when, following the analogy of the relations of cause and effect, as they are observed in the daily experiences of life, we assume that the great world of phenomena, in its entirety, must also have a cause;<sup>2</sup> to assume which is *ipso facto* to quit the domain within which the law of causation has validity. The idea of cause cannot be extended to things-in-themselves, or, "what amounts to the same, a judgment relating to thing-in-itself has only significance as rounding off the circle of our representations."<sup>3</sup> But if the reality of the thing-in-itself is denied, the Critical Philosophy has already given place to subjective idealism. The objects of human knowledge then hold no sort of relation to things outside of us; they are purely our representations—relations of the subject to itself, products of our spiritual-sensuous organization. But how in that case are we to account for our having the notion of objects at all? Lange himself takes his stand on the platform of the natural sciences. In his view, the limits of knowledge generally and those of the knowledge of nature are identical.<sup>4</sup> Even to psychology, he thinks that the method of natural science ought to be applied.<sup>5</sup> We are justified, he thinks, in taking for granted

<sup>1</sup> Lange, *Geschichte des Materialismus*, 2nd ed. vol. ii. pp. 48 ff., 57.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 49.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* note 25, p. 126.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* p. 161.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* 1st ed. p. 471, 3rd ed. p. 388.

that everything, not excepting even the mechanism of thought, is subject to physical conditions, and in not resting till we have found them out, that is, till "the physical mechanism of sensation and thought is clearly unveiled."<sup>1</sup> Kant recognised two main stems of human knowledge, sense and understanding, and made the remark that possibly both spring from one common root. "At the present day," says Lange, "this guess may be regarded as confirmed, and that by the experiments on the organs of sense which have been instituted by physiology. The separation of sense from understanding is *doctrinaire*, is misleading. Possibly, too, the conception of causality will one day be found to be rooted in the mechanism of reflex movement and of sympathetic stimulus; when that comes to pass, the Pure Reason will have been translated into physiology, and we shall thus be able to picture it more clearly to ourselves."<sup>2</sup> Instead of the expression "pure reason," Lange therefore uses "organization," or "physico-psychical organization," and further explains the latter designation by characterizing it as an attempt to indicate the thought "that the physical organization, regarded as phenomenon, is at one and the same time the psychical."<sup>3</sup>

What position has he thus reached? His idealism has passed over into decided empiricism and materialism. Our entire mental life, our sensation and thought alike, are to be traced back to the mechanism which is laid out in our physical organization.

§ 24. *The question then arises, What is this physical organization of ours?*

But what then is the physical organization which we are assured, considered as phenomenon, is at one and the same time the psychical? If the entire sensuous world is merely

<sup>1</sup> *Geschichte des Materialismus*, 1st ed. pp. 497-500.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 263.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* 3rd ed. Bd. ii. note 25, p. 125.

phenomenon, that is, subjective representation, it would surely be sheer inconsistency or thoughtlessness to make an exception of our organization. Our physico-psychical organization is itself nothing more than a part of the world of representations. As Lange says, "We are quite within our right if we regard, not only the outside world which appears to us, but also the *organs* by means of which we apprehend it, as mere images of that which is truly existent."<sup>1</sup> This "truly existent" something, what can it be but the thing-in-itself, which, on the other hand, has been found to be a mere product of our organization? What then is our organization itself? "The eye, with which we believe ourselves to see, is itself nothing but a product of our representation, and when we find that the images of sight are called into existence by the arrangements of the eye, we should never forget that the eye itself, with its contrivances or fittings, the optic nerve with the brain and all its structures, in which we would fain discover the *causes of thought*, are themselves simple *representations*." It must not be forgotten "that our brain itself is merely an image, or the abstraction of an image, which has come into existence in accordance with laws which control our representative activity. It is right enough, indeed, for the sake of simplifying scientific reflexion, as a rule, to halt at this image; but we should never forget that what we have thus got is simply a relation between the idea of the brain and the rest of our representations; that we are no whit nearer a fixed point outside the subjective domain. There is absolutely no other way of escaping from it than by guesses or suppositions."<sup>2</sup>

The earlier materialism took matter to be the really existent. For this naïve and dogmatic materialism Lange substitutes *critical* materialism, which is quite aware of the purely phenomenal character of matter. But in this case the whole world of experience, as well as matter, is reduced to a

<sup>1</sup> *Geschichte des Materialismus*, 1st ed. p. 496.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 497 f.

mere representation or idea. Lange teaches a materialism which denies the very principle of materialism, and with it all that thinkers have attempted to deduce from materialism. His idealism has transformed itself into materialism, and his materialism passes over again into idealism. The one of these views of the world rests on just as solid a foundation as the other; each has its inevitable double in the other, of which it cannot get rid. This attempt to effect a critical synthesis of idealism and materialism ends in an uncertain oscillation between two opposites—accordingly a certain vagueness, indecision, and ambiguity necessarily characterizes the presentation and exposition thereof; and one cannot be surprised that Hartmann should have defined Lange's position as *Confusionism*.<sup>1</sup> The two views of the world are so mixed up that neither can free itself from the other, and the one always draws the other, that is, its contradictory, in its train.

The logical issue of Kant's theory of knowledge here comes to light;—that issue is thoroughgoing idealism. But inasmuch as, according to Kant, there is no real knowledge whatever besides sensuous experience, a further consequence of the theory is an equally thoroughgoing materialism. The Kantian Philosophy contains two elements which do not blend so as to constitute a true organic unity. It is saddled with the old dualism of the real and the ideal, spirit and nature, subject and object, intelligence and matter. And this dualism reveals itself all the more glaringly in Neo-Kantism, because, on the one hand, it demands a mechanical explanation of our representations and conceptions; whilst, on the other hand, it maintains that the mechanism of our senses must again be regarded as a mere representation.

Even in Kant himself the tendency towards idealism predominated; and the empirical and materialistic elements which still cling to his philosophy were simply what could

<sup>1</sup> E. von Hartmann, *Neukantianismus, Schopenhauerianismus und Hegelianismus*, 1877, p. 5.

not be avoided or excluded. As we previously showed, history itself has pronounced judgment:—the proper logical outcome of the Critical Philosophy was the idealism of Fichte, which threw off the empirical element retained by Kant, deprived it of its independence, and reduced it to a product of mind. A philosophy of one piece was thus for the first time constructed.

In Lange's system, too, Idealism retains the upper hand. The dualism between mind and matter shows itself, it is true, in the most self-contradictory and complicated manner in all its harshness and rigour. But in this the author finds it impossible to rest, and he therefore manifests a tendency to essay a reconciliation. But neither Kantism nor Neo-Kantism supplies a higher principle in which the antitheses might be absorbed and unified. The old conflict must therefore be decided in favour of one or the other of the two sides; which side, from the very nature of the Kantian philosophy, could only be the idealistic; for the Critical Philosophy is idealistic to its very core.

Even Lange's criticism of the popular materialism is entirely based on Kant's idealistic theory of knowledge. But Lange advances beyond Kant, in so far as he does away with the thing-in-itself as a reality, degrading it to the position of an "epistemological category." In this way the last wall is broken down which separated the Critical Philosophy from the idealism of Fichte. Lange too, notwithstanding all the homage he pays to the natural sciences and to materialism, lands at last in complete idealism. His own presuppositions leave him no alternative but to teach that the entire phenomenal world, as well as the organs by means of which it is apprehended, are a product of our representation, and that all our knowledge is nothing but a relation between the brain-representation and our other representations. If such be the case, the battle is already decided. "The conflict between body and mind," says Lange, "has been decided in favour of the latter, and the true unity of existence thus secured. For

whilst materialism always failed to explain how a conscious sensation could be the result of a material movement; it is, on the contrary, not at all difficult to conceive that our entire conception of matter and its movements may be the product of an organization of psychical capabilities of sensation.”<sup>1</sup>

Kant's *theoretical* philosophy has therefore been developed by Lange into a critical materialism; and this again has by logical necessity transformed itself into thorough *idealism*. It is a materialism which is unable to save itself from complete idealism.

§ 25. *The Practical Philosophy of Kant shares the fate of the rest of his system.*

What becomes then of Kant's Practical Philosophy? Says Lange, “The entire practical philosophy, powerful as was the influence it exercised on Kant's contemporaries, is the mutable and transitory part of his system. All that is immutable is its site; not the edifice which the master erected thereon.” “The whole significance of the great reform inaugurated by Kant must rather be sought in his *Critique* of the *theoretical* reason; this holds good even in relation to Ethics, for the *Critique* not only helped one specific system of ethical ideas to the birth; but, properly developed, is fitted to render the same service to various periods of culture, with their constantly changing requirements.”<sup>2</sup> “Kant's aim was to avoid the manifest contradiction between Ideals and Life,—a contradiction which after all cannot be avoided: it cannot be avoided, because the subject, even whilst engaged in moral struggles, is not noumenon, but phænomenon.” In Kant's judgment, it is true, we ought to regard ourselves, when acting, as rational noumena, as things-in-themselves. “But the *corner-stone of the critique of reason*, which is, that we do not know

<sup>1</sup> Lange, *Geschichte des Materialismus*, 1st ed. p. 499 f.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 1st ed. vol. ii. p. 2 f.



even ourselves as we are in ourselves, but *merely as we appear to ourselves*," cannot be thus overthrown by moral volition. In every moral struggle, moreover, the question is not one of the will in itself, but one of our representation of ourselves and our volition; which representation is and inevitably remains phenomenon. Kant therefore, in the Practical Philosophy, constructs a knowledge which is not really knowledge; a knowledge which his own principles forbid to be described as knowledge.<sup>1</sup> That which constitutes the contents of the Practical Philosophy cannot truly be an *object of science* at all. Nor are we even warranted in attributing to it actuality. An actuality in the sense of an absolutely fixed existence, independent of us and yet known by us,—such an actuality neither does nor can exist for us.<sup>2</sup> For all the actuality of which we are cognizant is mere appearance. What we represent to ourselves as lying beyond the phenomenal, we have no right to include in the world of the really existent. The thing-in-itself is only a limitative conception. All attempts to convert its negative into a positive significance, land us inevitably in the region of fancy.<sup>3</sup>

There is no such thing as knowledge that reaches beyond the phenomenal. That which is not, cannot be known, though phantasy may, of course, frame for itself a notion thereof. Knowledge is concerned solely with what is actually given. Actuality, however, is the sum-total of necessary phenomena—phenomena forced on us by the senses.<sup>4</sup> Metaphysics, indeed, looks beyond, searches for the ultimate foundations of being; but Kant has demonstrated the impossibility of succeeding in the search;<sup>5</sup> and in putting an end to speculation, that is, to the investigation of the transcendent, he has abandoned the objective reality of religious ideas. Yet the human mind is stirred by an ineradicable

<sup>1</sup> Lange, *Geschichte des Materialismus*, 1st ed. vol. ii. p. 60 f.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 539.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 63.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* p. 539.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* p. 545.

impulse to pass beyond the (phenomenal) actuality, and, on the one hand, to combine the manifold phenomena into a whole, into a self-consistent picture of the world, notwithstanding that it can never become a matter of experience; on the other hand, to posit the ideal—the picture of a truly harmonious state—alongside of and beyond the actual. By thus rising in thought to a world in which all perfection meets, it seeks refreshment and quickening amid the conflicts and distresses of life. Man needs to supplement the actual with an ideal world of his own creation; and the loftiest and noblest functions of his mind come into play whilst he is engaged in its production. But as soon as this free act of his mind assumes the deceptive form of something scientifically demonstrable, materialism at once makes its appearance and overthrows his bolder speculations. “It is wrong, especially for us in Germany, to despair of arriving at a different solution of the problem; for in the philosophical poems of Schiller we possess works which combine extreme elevation above the actual, with the noblest stringency of thought; and by relegating the ideal openly and unhesitatingly to the domain of *phantasy*, endue it with overwhelming power.”<sup>1</sup> The answer to the question concerning the future of religion follows from this. The choice can only seriously lie between two courses. The one is to do away with religion entirely, and transfer its functions to the State, to science, and to art. Such an abolition, however, would involve the risk of spiritual pauperization, and might possibly call forth amongst the people a reaction which would assume far more fanatical and “coarse forms” than those which had happily been destroyed. The only other alternative is to “*penetrate to the kernel* of religion, and to vanquish fanaticism and superstition by rising consciously above the actual, and once for all giving up the attempt to falsify the actual by means of the mythical, which can in no case serve the purposes of knowledge.”<sup>2</sup> “As long

<sup>1</sup> Lange, *Geschichte des Materialismus*, vol. ii. p. 544 f.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 546 f.

as the kernel of religion was sought in certain doctrines regarding God, the human soul, creation, and its order, it was unavoidable that criticism, which undertook, on logical principles, to separate the chaff from the wheat, should lead at last to complete negation. Men sifted and sifted, till nothing remained. — If, on the contrary, the elevation of the soul above the actual, and the provision for it of a spiritual home, be regarded as the true kernel of religion, it may surely be expected that forms which have undergone the utmost possible purification shall be competent to initiate essentially the same psychical processes as the ‘cobbler’s faith’<sup>1</sup> of the uncultivated multitude; and, let ideas be ever so completely rarified by philosophy, there can never be utter failure.” What we have to do, therefore, is to accustom ourselves to attribute to the creative idea in itself, apart from agreement with history and natural science, though, of course, without falsification of either, a higher value than heretofore:—We must acquire the habit of regarding the world of the idea in its character of symbolical representative of the complete truth, as no less necessary to human progress than the knowledge of the understanding. “If religion has any value at all, and if its abiding value lies in its ethical, not in its logical substance, this must surely have been the case also in former days, indispensable as the faith of the letter might then have seemed.”<sup>2</sup>

Lange’s inference, accordingly, is this: if metaphysics are alike impossible and indispensable; if the human mind necessarily demands an “intelligible” world (*mundus intelligibilis*), although an “intelligible” world can never become an object of knowledge, and it is utterly unwarrantable to ascribe to it actuality,—such an “intelligible” world can only be regarded as an object and a creation of the

<sup>1</sup> [*Köhlerglaube*—the faith of a charcoal-burner; for which our equivalent might be the one given in the text.—TR.]

<sup>2</sup> Lange, *Geschichte des Materialismus*, vol. ii. p. 547 ff.

phantasy. The old antithesis between faith and knowledge, between religious and scientific truth, is thus transformed into an antithesis between the ideal and the actual, between phantasy and exact research. Religion and science, or the knowledge of the world, are thus for the first time rigidly separated. According to Lange, the heart and the phantasy are the sources from which issues forth the stream of religious life;<sup>1</sup> and the truth of religion lies exclusively in its ethical, not at all in its logical or historical contents. *Objectively* considered, the kernel of religion is the unspeakable, the absolutely inapprehensible, of which the phantasy alone can give us a notion by means of the images which it bodies forth; *subjectively* considered, it is the elevation of the soul above the actual, as a motive of moral action. But even the inapprehensible thus referred to, which forms the object of religious elevation and reverence, is nothing more than a subjective content of the soul and a product of the creative fancy. It has no reality outside of man; it must be kept rigidly apart from the world of being, of actual existence; for the thing-in-itself is merely a limitative conception: to attribute actuality to it would be a logical contradiction. Religion is thus lifted into the sphere of the ideal. The ideal, however, is not a result of investigation; investigation never gets beyond actually given particulars; but is rooted in the synthetic, architectonic capacity and tendency of the human mind, which impels it as by necessity to shape for itself a harmonious image of the world: it is a free creation of the phantasy, which, however, owing to its reflex influence on our conduct, has a value in the moulding of human life that cannot be too highly appreciated.

Kant separated religious knowledge from theoretical knowledge, that is, from the knowledge of the world, and showed that we can only have a practical acquaintance with religious truth; Neo-Kantism, carrying Kant's premises to their

<sup>1</sup> Lange, *Geschichte des Materialismus*, vol. ii. p. 555.

logical issue, argues that even this practical knowledge is null. Thus the assumptions which are most essentially proper to the Critical Philosophy lead to the conclusion that knowledge which is merely practical—knowledge divorced from theoretical knowledge—is no knowledge at all, but simply a free play of the phantasy.

And so the battle that has raged around the moral and religious ideas, ends in their being transformed into the conception of an ideal which the human soul creates for itself, in order that by the contemplation thereof it may quicken its own moral volition. The ideas of the reason are altogether destitute, therefore, of value as knowledge; but as motives to action they are of far-reaching practical importance; nay more, in the very act of denying them theoretical value, their practical significance is ensured. It is not till they are unreservedly relegated to the domain of the phantasy, and cease to lay claim to objective reality, that all danger of conflict with science is at once and for ever set aside. As Kant abolished knowledge in order to make room for faith; so his followers try to rescue the ideal contents of man's mental life by shutting them out from the domain of science.

§ 26. *The ultimate consequence of Neo-Kantism is theoretical Scepticism and practical Illusionism.*

It is evident, therefore, that the Neo-Kantian Philosophy is simply the Critical Philosophy consistently carried out; and it has two aspects. First, it asserts the materialistic nature of the phenomenal, though with the consciousness that phenomena are merely our representations, and then by way of supplementing its materialism, betakes itself to the standpoint of the ideal.

Lange's position is the logical outcome of the Critical Philosophy; but what is the logical outcome of Lange's position? Does it not include antagonisms within itself,

whose peaceful union must inevitably be broken up as soon as they are examined and applied? H. Vaihinger has drawn the inferences from Lange's theory of the world, though he has done so almost exclusively in the form of a recapitulation and interpretation of his master's own positions.<sup>1</sup>

And what, according to this disciple, is Lange's true opinion? Philosophy, says Vaihinger, has a twofold function,—a negative and a positive one. *Negatively*, critically its business is to show that it itself, considered as science, is impossible; it has to prove its own nullity; the critical theory of cognition shows that speculation has no claim to be regarded as truth. The *positive* business of philosophy is to speculate; but to do so with a clear consciousness that its results will be, not truth, but poetry.

It was far from Lange's intention to set forth a complete system; he restricted himself to developing a theory of knowledge, and pointing out its results. The former is such that if its correctness be granted, the human mind is incapable of knowing anything beyond itself. "Our thinking supplies us with no truth, not even with probabilities: nothing but contradictions, antinomies, antithetical, insoluble problems are ours." We have nothing absolute; nay, even "actuality" itself is merely a relative conception.<sup>2</sup> The Critical Philosophy, therefore, properly understood, takes up, in the present day, the same position as that occupied in ancient times by absolute scepticism. "Critical scepticism is the strict and proper outcome of the Kantian theory of knowledge; and Lange, although he is unwilling to allow the fact, really places contradiction on the throne of intellect; for he shows that all knowledge runs out into contradictions." Metaphysics, viewed as a critique of conceptions, can never have any result but the negative and sceptical one, that knowledge

<sup>1</sup> Hans Vaihinger, *Hartmann, Dühring, und Lange. Zur Geschichte der deutschen Philosophie im XIX. Jahrhundert*, Iserlohn 1876.

<sup>2</sup> Vaihinger, *l.c. passim*, see pp. 119, 60, 68.



is impossible, and the human mind is condemned perpetually to revolve in a circle whose charmed boundaries can never be overstepped.<sup>1</sup>

Phantasy, however, does overstep these limits; nay more, it is permitted to her to do so; but this right is hers only so long as she consents not to appear "in the borrowed garments of truth." She gives us poetry, not reality. The ideas of reason are an exceedingly valuable possession of the mind; but they are a product of our natural capacity, and "looked at psychologically, or from the point of view of the theory of cognition, are simply creations of the brain." It is the business of speculation, indeed, to construct a harmonious image of the world; but it ought always to bear in mind that such an image can never be anything more than a subjective ideal, that it can lay no claim to correspond to the reality. The world of ideals is what it is, because no reality can ever be shown to answer to it.<sup>2</sup> It is a product of the phantasy, for which it is easy to give a psychological explanation; it is therefore subjective. To claim reality and objective validity for ideal, synthetic fancies, is a misunderstanding; on the contrary, their lofty and eternal worth is grounded in their very lack of empirical reality. So that Lange's view culminates in the paradox "that we ought to have and may have a theory of the world (or religion), but we must not believe in it theoretically; we must only allow ourselves to be practically, æsthetically, ethically influenced by it." The source of religion is the same synthetic, harmonizing function of the human reason that manifests itself in art and metaphysics. On this account religion must never lay claim to value as Knowledge; it contains no higher insight; relations to science are forbidden it. Art, religion, and metaphysics fall under the same category—poetry: neither of them furnishes knowledge. The religious is only of value as image or symbol;

<sup>1</sup> Vaihinger, *l.c. passim*, see pp. 119, 60, 68, 105.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, see pp. 56, 65, 18, 107.

so far as it can claim to be truth—and it may do so—it is merely subjective truth. The solution of the problem of the future of religion is to be found, therefore, in the view that “though it is conceded that ideals have merely a subjective existence, they may be yet at the same time treated as though they corresponded to objective actualities.” What Lange recommends, therefore, is a “Religion without Faith.” He treats religion as he treats metaphysics—whilst he wishes to keep both, he will believe in neither. Religious ideas are ideals which merely live in us; and though we are indebted to them for ethical influences, we have no right to claim for them objective validity.<sup>1</sup>

Yet even Lange, as Vaihinger shows, has not quite avoided the rock on which Kant's system split—namely, the ambiguity and vacillation of the definition given of the “thing-in-itself,” and the misuse of that conception for the support of our subjective ideas. “Even in Lange the intellect has not completely succeeded in vanquishing its own prejudices; heteronomic and mystical elements are not perfectly eliminated; even he has not entirely broken with the dangerous principle of a ‘profounder meaning,’ as it has recently been designated: even he has not arrived at thorough clearness.” Objective ideas have become subjective ideals,<sup>2</sup> which have only a subjective existence, though they are to be treated as if realities corresponding to them objectively existed. Strictly speaking, however, he can only regard the religious sentiment as an habitual illusion. Religion, poetry, metaphysics may be classed together under the general head of human *ideology*. The ideal world, “the philosopher's harmonious image of the world, is a sheer illusion; and for philosophers of the school of Lange it is a *conscious illusion*.”<sup>3</sup>

We see, therefore, that Lange's point of view lands us,

<sup>1</sup> Vaihinger, *l.c. passim*, see p. 191 ff.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, see p. 122 f.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, see pp. 192, 195, 18.

theoretically considered, in radical *scepticism*; practically considered, in *illusionism*. And this is the legitimate, logical outcome of the Kantian antithesis between the theoretical and practical reason. Vaihinger's merit is to have fearlessly drawn the conclusion from the premises.

But we have not yet reached full clearness, we are only set face to face with a new contradiction. The ideal world, and religion with it, Vaihinger tells us, are to be deemed mere illusion; and yet they are to retain the *highest subjective and practical value*. But that is impossible. To retain our hold on that which has been discovered to be mere illusion, and to attribute to it the highest practical value, on the ground of its furnishing a real support in the midst of the stern realities of life—what a contradiction! Surely it is an absurdity to try to build all that lends human life a higher value—a value reaching out beyond the tangible and sensuous—on a foundation of sheer illusion! Let the objective truth of the religious idea be once denied, and we shall vainly endeavour to refrain from taking the final step in negation. That last and extreme step is the one which was taken long before the rise of Neo-Kantism, by Ludwig Feuerbach.

In Feuerbach's view, the essence of Christianity lies in the freedom of the heart and phantasy over against the limits, that is, the laws of nature and reason. Christians are free from nature; but their freedom is the freedom of the heart and imagination—the freedom of the miraculous. "Christ is the omnipotence of subjectivity, the heart delivered from all the bonds and laws of nature, the soul concentrated on itself alone to the exclusion of the world, the reality of all the desires of the heart, the Ascension of the phantasy, the Easter of the heart—Christ therefore is the distinction between Christianity and heathenism."<sup>1</sup> According to Feuerbach, too, religious ideas are merely subjective products of the fancy, destitute of

<sup>1</sup> Ludwig Feuerbach, *Wesen des Christenthums*, 2 Aufl., Leipzig 1843, pp. 186, 220, 222 f.

objective truth, and there is as little real difference between him and Lange-Vaihinger in this respect as in regard to the value set on philosophy. "True philosophy," says Feuerbach, "is the negation of philosophy,—it is no philosophy."<sup>1</sup> But if, as Lange and Vaihinger hold, the object of religious elevation and reverence has no reality outside of ourselves, it is in truth only our own nature, and religion is a relation of man to himself; nay more, as Feuerbach defined it, it is the relation of man "to his own essential nature, as to another being than himself."<sup>2</sup> If this be the case, there are only two alternatives open to us. *Either* the religious ideas are believed, and then, maintains Feuerbach, their influence is injurious. For faith divides a man against himself, and brings him into conflict with morality.<sup>3</sup> Faith has no feeling for virtue, and sucks away the best energies of morality. It cannot therefore be regarded as an *illusion having practical value*; on the contrary, it is an illusion that exercises a thoroughly destructive influence on humanity—it robs man, both of the vigour of his actual life and of his sense of truth and virtue.<sup>4</sup> Hence, if human nature is to be delivered from its self-estrangement and to be restored to its own pure essence, the first business is to emancipate it from the illusion of religious faith. The *other alternative* is this: assuming that religious ideas are recognised as illusions, then, of course, illusion *ipso facto* ceases,—recognised illusion is no longer illusion. One cannot therefore be surprised that Feuerbach should pour out the vials of his bitterest wrath on those who measure the value of things by their poetical charm; who plead the cause of illusions which are seen to be illusions, because they are beautiful and beneficial; and who are so devoid of reality and truth as not to feel that an illusion

<sup>1</sup> Ludwig Feuerbach, *Erläuterungen und Ergänzungen zum Wesen des Christenthums. Samml. Werke*, Bd. i. p. 9.

<sup>2</sup> Ludwig Feuerbach, *Wesen des Christenthums*, 2 Aufl. p. 20.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 367.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 406, 408.

is only beautiful so long as it is not regarded as such, but is deemed to be truth.<sup>1</sup>

In either case it is clear that if all that is conceded to religious ideas be an exclusively practical value, and that, too, on condition that their objective truth—in the realm of the theoretical reason—be surrendered, then they can no longer retain even a practical value. In point of fact, they can only possess *practical value* on the supposition that they are *theoretically true*.

We have thus shown, therefore, that Neo-Kantism, instead of establishing the Kantian philosophy on a new and better foundation, is really a second disintegration thereof; and the critical examination of it has led us to the same negative result as that to which we were led by our criticism of Kantism itself. The identity of the results in the two cases furnishes a strong confirmation of their correctness. As was previously observed, the result in a *theoretical* respect is the denial of the objective truth of human knowledge, that is, *scepticism*; in a *practical* respect, *illusionism*. Nor is it possible for us to surrender ourselves to a new illusion with regard to the nature of this issue, after the last stone of the edifice of self-deception has been overthrown by Feuerbach's remorseless criticism. The logical consequence of the Critical Philosophy being Illusionism, Kant's anthropocentric principle necessarily sinks at last into the anthropologism of Feuerbach.

### CHAPTER III.

#### POSITIVE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE NEO-KANTIAN PHILOSOPHY.

Even supposing Neo-Kantism to be a new disintegration of Kantism, we are by no means warranted in regarding its essential results as mere negation and illusion. An intellectual movement of the breadth and vigour which it has

<sup>1</sup> Ludwig Feuerbach, *Wesen des Christenthums*, 1 Aufl. 1841, p. x.

displayed cannot well be denied relative truth. In fact, Neo-Kantism is as far from having a merely negative value as Kantism itself. It, too, has a positive significance; and that positive significance is analogous to the positive significance which we found attaching to Kantism. The truth of Kant's system lay in its opposition to dogmatism and empiricism. In its intention it was a synthesis of these two antithetical positions; and though it accomplished its aim in an inadequate and even self-contradictory manner, there can be no question of its having prepared the way for a higher stage of philosophical knowledge. It cannot, however, be denied that in the philosophy of the period that succeeded Kant a new kind of *dogmatism* had developed itself; and to this dogmatism Neo-Kantism takes up an attitude of sharp opposition; it looks down upon it with disdain, deeming it nothing but an empty logical romanticism, relatively to which materialism must be welcomed as a healthy counterpoise.<sup>1</sup> This new dogmatism, we are assured, has long been outgrown by the scientific intellect of the present day; it has become unintelligible; it has lost all power of producing conviction; it lacks scientific cogency; and any attempt at a resuscitation of the post-Kantian Philosophy will be met by Neo-Kantism with the imperative demand that it critically examine itself and rigidly test its own foundations.

It is by *Empiricism*, on the contrary, that the thinking of the present day is dominated; and with it Neo-Kantism sympathizes, and has a kindred purpose; the two, indeed, agree in restricting thought to experience, in contenting themselves with the world as it is given. But then Neo-Kantism is also a theory of experience—the result of an effort to give a scientific account of experience; and as such rises higher than—goes out beyond—experience. Still further, it points out the *à priori* elements which are involved in experience. This being true, the absolutely exclusive and

<sup>1</sup> Lange, *Geschichte des Materialismus*, 3rd ed. vol. ii. p. 543.



negative relation which Empiricism had taken up towards Rationalism and Idealism is *ipso facto* renounced; for it is clearly shown itself to imply a rational and ideal element. Neo-Kantism, accordingly, by this very step places itself again in antagonism to Empiricism. Empiricism having been proved to include *à priori* constituents, can no longer figure as pure Empiricism, but must become something else; and as a consequence, scientific thought is forced to apply itself afresh to philosophical problems which had been long regarded as dead and buried. Now, so far as Neo-Kantism opposes Empiricism, it enters into inner relations with Rationalism and Dogmatism, for the essential aim of these two is to vindicate a purely rational *à priori* knowledge for the human intellect. It is quite intelligible, therefore, how Neo-Kantism should represent itself as the synthesis of Dogmatism and Empiricism—in point of fact, it is antagonistic to both, and yet akin to both.

§ 27. *Neo-Kantism indicates the new direction which must be taken by efforts to solve old problems, namely, that of objective critical inquiry.*

In this direction, therefore, must be sought the true significance and relative truth of Neo-Kantism. For although it has fallen as far short of success as Kantism before it, and has logically issued in the abolition of Knowledge itself, it has formulated afresh the problem, the solution of which philosophy must undertake, namely, the conciliation of these antagonistic points of view. This solution cannot now, however, be exclusively sought in a theory of cognition, nor in an answer to the question how, in obedience to the conditions imposed by our intellect, we are compelled to regard things; for any such restriction would confine us within the circle of our own consciousness, and effectually bar contact with things themselves. Neo-Kantism, in fact, has involuntarily

supplied the proof that any such solution is in reality no solution; that it leads, on the contrary, not to the reconciliation of antitheses, but to mere impotent negations. Indeed, it is utterly inconceivable that the scientific intellect of the present day should allow itself to be permanently confined within the narrow formulae of the Kantian theory of cognition; and the attempt that has, notwithstanding, again been made, can have but one result, namely, to burst them asunder and to lead the way to an *objective-critical investigation* of the old problems, as distinguished from one that is merely phenomenal and epistemological.

In so far as Neo-Kantism is the criticism alike of Empiricism and of Dogmatism, and has set the task of mediating between antagonistic principles and methods, it may justly be regarded as constituting a transition and preparation for a new scientific epoch. It seems at all events to form the close of an epoch—the epoch of exclusive Empiricism; a period which, like the one preceding Kant and the French Revolution, was characterized, in a scientific respect, by a diminution of ideas and a general decline of the philosophic spirit. The truth, justification, and necessity of the period now drawing to a close lie in its opposition to the dogmatism of post-Kantian philosophy: though the very exclusiveness of this opposition has given it a onesided character. Whilst the scientific consciousness has on the one side transcended the dogmatism of that epoch, on the other side it has lagged behind it. Indeed, the true substance of that great creative period of modern philosophy has thus far been too little understood and assimilated; it has not yet become, as it deserved to become, the common property of the scientific mind: it has not yet been worked up and thought out. This is especially true of the grand conceptions of Baader and the later Schelling, which still tarry on lonely heights which the intellect of the present day has thus far left unscaled and unscanned.

Our attention has been directed to two fundamental tendencies of the intellect which have appeared in succession and in sharp antagonism the one to the other, each having been the constitutive principle of an epoch. But though contrasted, their relation to each other is by no means merely negative. The real is not the negation of the ideal: the true function of the former is to be the basis and vehicle of the latter. When, then, the ideal comes forward alone and by itself, it appears as something hovering in the air without foundation; it is the unsubstantial and unreal; in short, it cannot stand without a basis of reality. This is the key to the significance of the exclusively realistic period which is now nearing its close. Unless the intellectual development of our nation is to end with the shameful shipwreck of every higher conviction, the realism of the present moment cannot have finally and for ever set aside and supplanted the lofty idealism of the preceding epoch: rather will its function be to prepare the way for a new and surer knowledge of the ideal possessions of humanity; to lay a new and firmer foundation for, whilst at the same time clarifying and sifting, the idealism of an earlier period. That which cannot stand the test of contact with actuality cannot be really true. The task which Neo-Kantism imposes on the philosophy of the future is to rear the edifice of speculation, planned by the last generation, on firmer foundations and with ampler means; to conciliate the antagonistic principles by which two historical epochs were dominated; to show that those principles are but moments of one and the same intuitional whole, that have been temporarily rent asunder and made to stand apart; in short, to rise to a point of view from which they may be seen to interpenetrate and constitute a higher inner unity.

Whilst, then, a relative justification and a positive value must be conceded to Neo-Kantism, it still remains true that it is no less incapable than Kantism before it of conducting the human mind to tenable and self-consistent

knowledge. On the contrary, it logically involves, first, its own self-disintegration; and then the denial both of experience and of rational knowledge.

As the Critical Philosophy gave rise to systems of a totally different character from itself, which, notwithstanding the difference of their aims, were bent on retaining a hold of whatever truth lay in the system from which they took their rise; so Neo-Kantism is either the declared termination of all philosophy, the inauguration of non-philosophy, the conscious confession that we neither are nor want to be philosophers; in other words, it is either the final reduction of philosophy to a theory of cognition, that, too, a theory which defines itself as a theory of ignorance and the science of the inability to know anything at all; or else it must consent to advance beyond itself. If the consciousness of the present day, with its strong prejudice in favour of Empiricism, should awaken to the necessity of philosophical inquiry in general, and to the importance of the philosophical systems of the last epoch in particular, a beginning would doubtless have to be made with the revival of Kantism; but it would be merely a beginning, not the end. The accusation of a blind cultus of Kant, which is now sometimes raised, is therefore not altogether groundless. Blind it is, so far as it does not understand its own nature, and instead of confessing itself to be a mere transition, the preparation for a new movement, claims to be the realization of the goal. It will cease, however, to be a germ of progress, and will degenerate into a principle of obstruction and disintegration, if it do not rise to the knowledge that Kantism itself requires us to strike into paths totally different from those which were opened up by Kant, if there is any future for philosophy itself.

## PART SECOND.

### THE PHILOSOPHY OF LOTZE.

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Πάντως γὰρ οὐ τοῦτο σκιπτεῖον, ὅστις αὐτὸ εἶπεν, ἀλλὰ  
πότιρον ἀληθὲς λήγισται ἢ οὐ.—PLAT. *Charm.* 161 c.

WE have investigated the Kantian and Neo-Kantian systems of philosophy, and have arrived at a result which is not fitted to prepossess us in favour of any attempt to build a theology on foundations which they supply. At the same time, the purpose we have in view of examining the theology of Ritschl is not thereby much advanced. For though Ritschl not infrequently relies on Kant, and it has become usual to describe his theology as Neo-Kantism,<sup>1</sup> he himself has expressly repudiated the Kantian theory of cognition, and declared himself, in this respect, a disciple of Lotze.<sup>2</sup> What importance is to be attached to this repudiation we shall see when we come to examine the theory of knowledge he himself lays down. In view, however, of the relation he takes up towards Lotze, it will be necessary for us first to submit that philosopher's theory of cognition to a critical examination. But as that theory is an integral part of Lotze's entire philosophical system, we must begin our task with a brief delineation of its fundamental features.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. e.g. Otto Pfeiderer, *Religionsphilosophie auf geschichtlicher Grundlage*, Berlin 1878, p. 192 ff., Aufl. 2, Bd. i. 1883, Abschnitt iv. cap. 2. Pünjer, *Geschichte der christl. Religionsphilosophie*, Bd. ii. p. 340. (Translation of vol. i. published by T. & T. Clark.) Dorner, *System der christl. Glaubenslehre*, Bd. ii. p. 379. (Translation published by T. & T. Clark.)

<sup>2</sup> Ritschl, *Die christliche Lehre von der Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, Aufl. 2, Bd. iii. p. 19 f.

## CHAPTER I.

## THE FUNDAMENTAL IDEAS OF LOTZE'S PHILOSOPHY.

Shortly after Lotze's death, attention was very properly called by Edmund Pfeiderer to the services rendered by him for more than two decennia as a teacher and guide in philosophy; and an honourable place has long been assigned to him in the history of philosophy.<sup>1</sup> At a time when it was the fashion to neglect and despair of philosophical study, Lotze courageously defended and prosecuted it, raised its banner, so to speak, from the dust, and bore it aloft, inspiring others with his own courage and self-reliance. His comprehensive mind was specially qualified for such a task. He was recognised as a distinguished authority, not only in the domain of natural science and medicine,<sup>2</sup> but also in that of philosophical history.<sup>3</sup> In him these two widely divergent spheres of knowledge formed a close alliance. Jürgen Bona Meyer, the Kantian, calls him "the greatest metaphysician of the day."<sup>4</sup> Even such a decided antagonist as Franz Hoffmann could not help characterizing him as one of the most variously cultured and acutest of our philosophers.<sup>5</sup> And Lotze's incisiveness and acuteness did not clothe itself in long-drawn logical arguments, but in a dress of easy grace and fascinating charm.

Whilst, however, we cordially recognise the great excellences of Lotze's intellectual work, one thing at all events

<sup>1</sup> Edmund Pfeiderer, *Lotze's philosophische Weltanschauung nach ihren Grundzügen*, Berlin 1882, p. 4 f. Fr. Ueberweg's *Grundriss der Geschichte der Philosophie*, Theil iii. Aufl. 6, 1883, p. 439 ff. Joh. Ed. Erdmann, *Grundriss der Geschichte der Philosophie*, Bd. ii. p. 781 ff.

<sup>2</sup> See Note 27 in Appendix.

<sup>3</sup> E. Pfeiderer, *l.c. passim*, p. 4 f.

<sup>4</sup> *Zeitschrift für die gebildete Welt über das gesammte Wissen unserer Zeit*, Herausgeg. von Richard Fleischer, Bd. iii. 1883, p. 293.

<sup>5</sup> Franz Hoffmann in *Fr. von Baader's Sämmtliche Werke*, Bd. x. p. lii.



must not be overlooked. His philosophy is a philosophy of experience; and in keen analysis of what is given in experience, he has scarcely his equal; but his forte is the investigation of individual problems, which, after the manner of Herbart, he approaches from different sides, rather than the construction of a thoroughly worked out and self-consistent system. One who reveres and admires Lotze, and who regards him as constituting an epoch, O. Caspari, is compelled nevertheless to allow that his special merit must be sought, not in the comprehensive presentation of a complete and logically harmonious view of things in their totality, but in his acute detailed inquiries—inquiries which laid bare all the various aspects of any problem to which they were devoted, brought out its difficulties, and opened up insight into its profoundest depths, and accordingly thus threw out a great wealth of suggestions.<sup>1</sup> We, for our part, should be disposed rather to qualify the epithet profound. Lotze was rather acute than profound. He has no doubt discussed a number of philosophical problems with great acuteness; even though he may have failed to solve them. As a natural scientist he was at first a rigid empiricist, leaning on Kant, though also on Herbart and Leibnitz. With Spinoza, he held the substantial unity of all being; then he reckoned with Fichte, Schelling, Hegel, and Weisse; and like Plato ended with the idea of the absolutely good, which he defined as the All-Personality. He followed Kant in taking for granted that the world of sense is purely phenomenal; but he parted company with him in asserting for theoretical thought a knowledge of the things-in-themselves. He agrees with scientists in assuming the existence of an infinite multiplicity of simple beings, which constitute the basis of the world of sense; and after Herbart's example, designates them *the reals*. In Lotze's view, however, these same reals are of the nature of souls, spirits, because of their

<sup>1</sup> Dr. O. Caspari, *Hermann Lotze in seiner Stellung zu der durch Kant begründeten neuesten Geschichte der Philosophie*, Breslau 1883, pp. 4, 53.

independent existence. He holds, too, that this multiplicity of reals is embraced by the absolute all-one substance. Only on the assumption of the substantial unity of everything existent is it possible, according to Lotze, to account for the interaction of things, for the action of one thing on another.<sup>1</sup> But if everything that exists is conjoined in one substance, the reals are transformed into acts and modifications of the one infinite being.<sup>2</sup> All things that exist constitute in truth but one infinite being, which in and through individual things expresses in connected forms its own unchanging, identical nature.<sup>3</sup> That which to us wears the appearance of an effect transmitted from one thing to another, is in reality nothing but an immanent action of the one infinite being in and on himself.

Such is the doctrine of that Theoretical Philosophy which professes to be the sum-total of what philosophy can theoretically demonstrate. The theme which it undertakes to develop is, according to Lotze, the theoretical contemplation<sup>4</sup> of the world, the view of the world formed by the understanding or by the reason.<sup>5</sup> From this he distinguishes another domain, which embraces that which serves to supplement and complete the rational view of the world, although in itself not susceptible of theoretical demonstration,<sup>6</sup> namely, the realm of religious and moral truth. In this domain, on the ground of an immediate feeling of the reason, or, in other words, of a faculty of estimating value or worth, with which the human mind is originally endowed, it assumes that the ideal—that which is highest and most valuable—cannot be a mere thought, but must have an actual existence. Lotze then goes on to identify the conception of infinite substance, at which the theoretical view of the world arrived, with the religious con-

<sup>1</sup> Lotze, *Mikrokosmos*, Aufl. 3, Bd. iii. p. 488 f. (Translation published by T. & T. Clark.)

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 548.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 488.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* p. 562.

<sup>5</sup> Lotze, *Grundzüge der Religionsphilosophie*, 1882, § 89, § 3; 2nd ed. 1884, § 80.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.* 1st ed. p. 4; *l.c.* § 83; 2nd ed. § 74.

ception of the living God;<sup>1</sup> and to define that all-one substance as *the absolutely good* and the *all-personality*.

These are the main thoughts of Lotze's philosophy.

§ 28. *The self-contradictions in Lotze's system, especially those involved in his personal pantheism.*

Glaring are the contradictions into which Lotze has fallen. The reals he teaches are modifications of the one universal substance; and yet their essence at the same time consists in being independent (*Fürsichsein*). Now, according to the well-known definition given by Spinoza<sup>2</sup>—a definition which cannot justly be assailed—a *modus* or mode is that which has no being in itself, but exists in or forms part of another being. If that which has an existence of its own is defined as a modification, that is, as a *modus*, it has no existence in and by itself, but is substantially one with that of which it is the *modus*; it is not therefore an independent something, but a something which forms part of, belongs to another. If, however, on the contrary, the independent existence of the reals be insisted on, then they are no longer modifications of the one absolute substance; and a substantial unity of all being, such as Lotze teaches, cannot any longer be maintained.

Again, it is a contradiction when the Theoretical Philosophy represents the absolute solely as absolute substance. If the absolute be conceived merely as substance, it is not conceived as absolute; for were it merely the substance underlying everything that exists, then finite beings must be its necessary affections and modifications; it would consequently be conditioned and determined by the finite; it would be an absolute, therefore, which is conditioned by the non-absolute, which is a self-abolishing conception. Further, if it is merely

<sup>1</sup> Lotze, *Mikrokosmos*, Aufl. 3, Bd. iii. p. 561 (translation published by T. & T. Clark); *Grundzüge der Religionsphilosophie*, Aufl. 1, § 22.

<sup>2</sup> Spinozae, *Ethices Pars prima*, Def. III. and V.

the substance of all existence, it can have no existence of its own; for it exists solely in the modes of which it is the substance, not in itself; it has therefore no other being than the being of that which itself is not, that is, of that which, though substantially identical with it, does not constitute its proper, its very own, independent being, but merely cleaves to it as a modification. It cannot be that which, after all, is simply a mode of itself; equally far is it from having a being different from its own many modifications; inasmuch as it has no existence at all save in its *modi*. The conception of the absolute as mere substance is one, therefore, that disintegrates itself. Theoretical thought is thus under the necessity of transcending that conception of the absolute, and of advancing onward to the notion of the absolute subject, the absolute personality. It is compelled to take this step by its own method: not by a demand of feeling, or of the heart, or of the faculty of estimating values. Besides, as Lotze holds that matter is purely phenomenal, he cannot, with Spinoza, regard "the one veritably real," or as he also designates it, the "infinite all-embracing real," i.e. the absolute substance, as the unity of thought and extension, of mind and matter. He himself, too, maintains it to be quite impossible really to represent to ourselves, as the monistic systems profess to do, a higher principle, which, though itself neither mind nor matter, neither conscious nor unconscious, combines both and supplies both.<sup>1</sup> In point of fact, according to him, nothing exists but the reals, whose very essence is to exist for themselves, that is, to be spiritual, and the infinite real, which embraces all other reals. Now, if the former are spiritual in nature, the infinite, which is the very ground of their existence, must surely also be conceived as spiritual. But if it is spirit, it cannot be mere substance, mere being-in-itself; and it must also be being which is itself (*Seinselbstsein*) subject, personality, or else the supreme being

<sup>1</sup> Lotze, *Grundzüge der Religionsphilosophie*, Aufl. 1, § 25. See also Note 23 in Appendix.

must be conceived with Hartmann as unconscious mind—a conception with regard to which Lotze himself remarks, that as a designation of the nature of the supreme being it is without positive real meaning, and that it would be hard to say how a mind which is essentially unconscious can be a mind at all.<sup>1</sup> From all this it follows clearly that even the Theoretical Philosophy issues in a doctrine of the personality of God. Lotze draws a line between this doctrine and the rational theory of the world, regarding the former as supplementary to purely theoretical thought. But when the personality of God is represented as universal personality,—as it is in the Practical Philosophy,—then the contradictions involved in a personal pantheism are superadded to those which encumber substantial pantheism, and from which his Theoretical Philosophy left him no escape.<sup>2</sup>

Lotze thinks it possible, indeed, to escape the meshes of pantheism by confessing that that to which pantheism ascribes being, namely, the visible world, with its extension, forms, and ceaseless movements, is in truth conceivable only as phenomenon; that it is *only* in virtue of his own erroneous assumption of the contrary that the pantheist is able to regard “the world of mind as a single blossom on the vigorous stem of material, blindly working reality.”<sup>3</sup> But in making this observation, he has imputed to pantheism what really is chargeable only against materialism. Pantheism has never conceived the principle from which mental life is derived as “material reality.” And though Lotze treats the spiritual world as mere phenomenon, he, notwithstanding, regards the plurality of reals which remain after everything merely phenomenal has been put aside as substantially identical with the one ground of the universe. All that he has done, therefore, is to substitute one form of pantheism for another, not to get rid

<sup>1</sup> Lotze, *Grundzüge der Religionsphilosophie*, Aufl. 1, § 29; Aufl. 2, § 25.

<sup>2</sup> See Note 29 in Appendix.

<sup>3</sup> Lotze, *Mikrokosmos*, Bd. iii. p. 568 f.

of it altogether. For even in his view, "everything that exists constitutes but one infinite essence,"<sup>1</sup> the one substance which is all.<sup>2</sup>

§ 29. *His great conception of the substantial unity of all things shown to be untenable.*

But even the conception of the *substantial unity of everything that exists*—the highest conception attainable we are assured by theoretical thought—cannot be securely established on Lotze's principles.

According to Lotze, the being of things is a standing in relations. It is of the very idea and essence of that which exists to stand in relations; there is no such thing as existence without relations; there is no other sort of actual existence but the standing in relations.<sup>3</sup> And these relations are neither more nor less than the immediate inner interactions which are being perpetually exchanged between things.<sup>4</sup> But interaction, we are told, is conceivable only on the assumption of a substantial unity of all existence. Wherein then consists the being of this *One*, which must be presupposed, if the action of one thing on another is to be possible? Lotze's express doctrine is—that that which embraces everything, on which rests the unity of the contents of the world, which is the sum-total of things, cannot be regarded as stationary being—being that is at rest. Being that is at rest is, on the contrary, merely the self-maintenance of that which is ever becoming, ever growing. Not self-identity at rest, but eternally self-same movement—this alone is the true view of the being of that which veritably exists.<sup>5</sup>

In a word, true being is constant growth, eternal move-

<sup>1</sup> Lotze, *Mikrokosmos*, Bd. iii. p. 483.

<sup>2</sup> See Note 30 in Appendix.

<sup>3</sup> Lotze, *l.c.* p. 473 f.

<sup>4</sup> Lotze, *Metaphysik. Drei Bücher der Ontologie, Kosmologie, und Psychologie*, Leipzig 1879, p. 160. See Note 31 in Appendix.

<sup>5</sup> Lotze, *l.c.* pp. 164, 177.



ment. By taking up this position, Lotze has effected the transition from Spinoza to Hegel. Caspari expresses the opinion that Lotze was the first really to confute and overcome Hegel;<sup>1</sup> but this is scarcely correct. He has acutely controverted, indeed, some of Hegel's notions, for example, that of pure being;<sup>2</sup> also Hegel's whole scheme of logical concepts as representing the content of the objective world. But in the case with which we are directly concerned he has himself been drawn into the Hegelian current of thought. He protests, it is true, against the theory of absolute growth or becoming;<sup>3</sup> and yet, on the other hand, teaches that true being is eternal movement. It is this conception of absolute movement—the thought that the *beënt* is not, but *becomes*, and that the truth of its being is to be found alone in this its becoming—which Lotze has thus revived and installed in the position of the true conception of the actuality of the world. In opposition thereto, we need to recall once more Plato's polemic in his *Theætetus* against the Heraclitean principle of the eternal flux of all being, as well as the modern criticism directed against the corresponding idea of an absolute process which lies at the root of the Hegelian philosophy. But the conception of substance is thus also *ipso facto* surrendered; for substance is that which abides in the midst of change, and in this sense is identity at rest. Whereas, according to Lotze, nothing abides but the interaction itself. When, therefore, a disciple of Lotze lays down the position that the *beënt* is not substance, and that the conception of substance has no reality at all, he is but consistently carrying out the master's principles.<sup>4</sup> Yet we were told that interaction in any form is unthinkable apart from the assumption of the *all-one* substance. If there is no substance, there can be no substantial unity of the existent; and the reals, which

<sup>1</sup> O. Caspari, *Hermann Lotze*, p. 5 f.

<sup>2</sup> Lotze, *Grundzüge der Metaphysik*, § 11, etc.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* § 33.

<sup>4</sup> E. Rehnisch, *Studien zur Metaphysik*, Göttingen 1872; Heft 1, p. 64.

we were instructed to regard as substantially conjoined, are just as truly isolated and incapable of acting on each other as the monads of Leibnitz, which were conceived as existing alongside of each other in unrelated independence; or as the reals of Herbart, which are absolutely simple essences, "islands without bridges and without ships." Consistency would therefore require the denial of all and every connection between things; unless, with Leibnitz, we take refuge in the idea of a pre-established harmony—an idea, however, which Lotze decidedly rejected.<sup>1</sup> The outcome of this form of substantial pantheism would consequently be the direct opposite of itself, namely, unlimited pluralism and individualism.

§ 30. *This, however, is no logical halting-place;—the reals must also be denied.*

But there is no halting even here. If it once be granted that the very idea of being is the standing in relation, consequently eternal movement, then existence can no longer be properly predicated even of the reals. The true conception of a real is that which is for itself; but if the very being of the truly *beënt* is a constant becoming, eternal movement, there cannot exist beings which are for themselves (*für sich seiende Wesen*); any such beings would be mere moments of the eternal movement of all being, not therefore properly *beënt*, but ever merely becoming. Neither individual beings nor an all-embracing substance can be affirmed to be the abiding in the midst of the universal change—the one as little as the other. Both alike are swept off in the process of perpetual becoming; they are carried away by it and disappear. The one universal substance is not; the reals are not; eternal movement alone is.

But—*eternal movement the only being*—this is a conception which annihilates itself. The conversion of all being into movement is a contradiction in its very nature. It is a notion

<sup>1</sup> Lotze, *Metaphysik*, p. 134; *Grundzüge der Metaphysik*, § 44.

of movement, according to which that which moves is absolutely identical with the movement; the idea of a process without a subject of which it is the process. But since, in the last instance, we find it impossible to ascribe reality to this conception,—the conception of eternal movement as the only existent,—what remains left of our author's rational theory of the world? Everything which was at first regarded as having actual existence turns out to be mere imagination, and the whole real world is resolved into the illusive scenery of a dream.

There still remains, however, that which is supposed to supplement the purely rational view of the world. But if we are unable to define the nature of that which is to be supplemented, what can be said in regard to the supplement itself? Even if we should grant that the true essence or being of the world is eternal movement, that which is provided as a supplement would notwithstanding be untenable. The surrender of a one universal substance of all existence involves, *ipso facto*, the surrender of the universal personality,—the two stand or fall together. For the latter was based on the assumption that the living personal God is identical with the one universal substance. God cannot therefore be the true being and essence of the world; this moment must be eliminated from the conception of God. But this carries with it the loss of the divine immanence; for the doctrine of the divine immanence was founded on the identification of the conception of the living God with that of the indwelling ground of the world, as the substantial unity of all that exists, the all-embracing essence of the universe. We are thrown back, therefore, on the idea of a transcendent God—an idea with regard to which it is hard to say what bearing it can have on the explanation of the world after we have been told, first, that all efforts to deduce the course of nature from its simplest roots presuppose not merely manifold real elements *originally given*, but also *given* movements between

them.<sup>1</sup> Further, that the business of metaphysics is to inquire into the inner order of what is given, not to derive what is given from that which is not given;<sup>2</sup> and, lastly, that we shall have to reconcile our minds to an unbroken determinism—a determinism which implies that the world, as a whole and in all its details, down to the very minutest, has been determined beforehand;<sup>3</sup> the predestination thus accepted not being a decree hovering over and existing apart from the world, but a necessity lying in the very factors of the world itself.

Either, then, this theistic addition must be rejected as a mere concession to the feelings and a hindrance to a harmonious self-consistent theory, and thorough monism must be accepted, as is demanded by Caspari;<sup>4</sup> or else our steps must be turned in the direction of a truly theistic theory; in which case, however, the entire view of the relation of God to the world must needs submit to very radical changes.

The defects which reveal themselves in this philosophical system are therefore of a very serious kind. In individual points its author has displayed remarkable acuteness; but in spite of its lofty and noble aim, the system lacks unity; it is no consistent development from a single germinal principle. Lotze has struggled to reconcile the most manifold antitheses on an empirical and Kantian basis; but struggled in vain. The pluralism of Herbart is blended with Spinozism, Spinozism with Hegelianism, idealism with a mechanical view of nature, and theism with pantheism. The natural result is an uncertain oscillation between pluralism and monism, between substantialism and absolute movement or flux, between the idea of a personal God and the monistic idea of one ultimate principle and ground of the world, between idealism and mechanism. All these antitheses are combined; but owing to the lack of a common principle, they do not take

<sup>1</sup> Lotze, *Metaphysik*, p. 162.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 163.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 135.

<sup>4</sup> Caspari, *Hermann Lotze*, Abschn. 6.

their places as momenta of one great harmonious system. To this extent the philosophy of Lotze has rather a syncretistic than a truly creative character. It is an ingeniously comprehensive eclecticism, which makes a skilful use of materials provided by its predecessors. The most diverse principles here sit peacefully cheek by jowl—only, however, so long as the rich, versatile, and noble mind of the thinker who has brought them together maintains the peace among them. No sooner, however, do they stand by themselves and look each other in the face; no sooner do comparisons begin to be instituted between them; no sooner does their real character manifest itself,—than they turn out to be mutual foes, and the apparent union gives place to a struggle in which each inflicts a death-blow on the other.

## CHAPTER II.

### LOTZE'S THEORY OF COGNITION.

After this critical survey of the chief points of Lotze's philosophy, we are prepared to understand his theory of cognition, which, be it remembered, does not take the place of a foundation on which the system itself is built, which it presupposes, but which grows out of it as one of its integral parts.

§ 31. *As a critical realist, Lotze, in the matter of the theory of cognition, places himself in opposition to Kant, the critical idealist.*

Lotze takes up a position of antagonism to Kant. He is not satisfied with the latter's purely immanent conception of truth. Theoretical thought ought not, he thinks, to be shut up within the mind and its conditions. His point of view is not that of critical idealism; on the contrary, like Herbart,

he is a critical realist; his aim is to attain to a knowledge of that which transcends consciousness, of that which is independent of consciousness, of the truly objective and real—of things-in-themselves. Things-in-themselves are, in his view, actions (*Aktionen*) of the absolute substance. Behind the world of sense stands the one universal, the all-one substance; and things are in reality and truth soul-like essences, whose relation to the absolute substance is that of its own living acts and states.

But what, then, becomes of the world of sense? It is mere phenomenon; and not even objective phenomenon, but phenomenon in a purely subjective sense. Lotze gives in his adhesion to Kant's view of the ideal nature of space in the following terms: "Space and spatial relations are all of them mere forms of our subjective intuition, not applicable to the things, or the relations of the things, which are the active causes of all our individual intuitions."<sup>1</sup> But if space is a mere form of subjective intuition, that which we intuit in space is as exclusively in us as space itself; outside of us there is nothing. Time also, in like manner, is a form of intuition: the temporal-spatial world itself is phenomenon.<sup>2</sup>

But Lotze further adopts the mechanical view of the world, teaching that sensations are the product of the soul itself, and that these sensations, though arising under the stimulus of external impressions, resemble neither the impressions nor the things whence the impressions proceed. He considers it futile to defend the reality of sensuous phenomena against this doctrine. Our sensuous perceptions exist but in one sphere, the sphere of consciousness; and have but one mode of existence, namely, existence as a mode of consciousness.<sup>3</sup> It is mere prejudice to suppose that the sensitive and cognitive powers exist solely for the purpose of forming for our con-

<sup>1</sup> Lotze, *Mikrokosmos*, Bd. iii. p. 491.

<sup>2</sup> Lotze, *Grundzüge der Metaphysik*, § 77.

<sup>3</sup> Lotze, *Mikrokosmos*, Bd. i. p. 390 f.



sciousness images of things as they are. Being and knowing are not so related to each other that the latter is a simple repetition of the former; the contents of the intellect are not merely the existent outside world over again.<sup>1</sup> "It is a mere prejudice to suppose that the world is complete and fully equipped without the realm of spirits, and that the activity put forth by spirits in representation is a sort of thing thrown in over and above; which, however, adds nothing to the previous sum-total, but is simply an intellectual reflection of that which is already complete in itself." The function of representation does not exist for the purpose of imagining things; but things (so far as a meaning can still attach to this term) exist in order that "by their action they may generate representations; which representations are valuable in themselves and for the sake of their own contents, not because of their supposed or real agreement with an objective condition of things."<sup>2</sup> Knowledge is not the reflected image of an already existent world; but the whole sensuous world as such is a product of our own mind, and exists solely in our representation. "The contents of sensuous perception, light and colour, sound and smell, can only be understood when regarded as forms or states of intuition or knowledge." Any attempt, therefore, to treat that which is only thinkable as an inner condition of some sense, as if it were an outward quality adhering to things destitute of sensation or consciousness, will be fruitless.<sup>3</sup> The phenomenon of an extended world exists only for personal spirits; and the entire view of the world which hovers before our consciousness is a product of our imagination, playing mysteriously according to its own laws: it has no reality whatever other than that of a mental phenomenon.<sup>4</sup>

But if nothing but that which is perceptible by sense is given in experience, how can a knowledge be gained of that

<sup>1</sup> Lotze, *Mikrokosmos*, Bd. i. p. 394 f.

<sup>2</sup> Lotze, *Grundzüge der Metaphysik*, § 85. See Note 32 in Appendix.

<sup>3</sup> Lotze, *Mikrokosmos*, Bd. i. p. 398.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* Bd. iii. pp. 623, 528.

which cannot become matter of experience, namely, of that which lies at the foundation of phenomena? That a reality, whose action on our mind gives rise to the appearance of a world, exists, is in this connection always assumed. What then is this reality? What is the subject that appears? What is that which constitutes positively the essence of things? This can only be ascertained inferentially. If things are to render the service required of them, namely, to be centres of action or media for the transmission of influence, they must also be capable of being affected, consequently of undergoing internal changes; they must be capable of action and passion, and yet of retaining their identity whilst their states are changing. But how is this possible? In our own minds alone have we any experience of the solution of this problem. They alone undergo changes of state whilst still retaining their identity. If, then, there are things endowed with the properties we are entitled to require of *things*, they must be more than mere things: only as they participate in those characteristics of mind to which attention was just called can they fulfil the general conditions thus of *thinghood* (*Dingheit*); they must therefore be beings which share with mind, though in various forms and degrees, the general characteristics of mentality.<sup>1</sup>

According to Lotze, then, we are undoubtedly in a position to say what things-in-themselves are;—they are spirits, souls. But what then is the relation between a thing-in-itself and phenomenon? Phenomenon is not that which adheres to things as they are in themselves; it is not the manifestation of the things themselves; no, it is simply something that belongs to the subject, simply our representation; and this same representation is not the copy of an objective reality that exists independently of our consciousness, it is not the

<sup>1</sup> Lotze, *Mikrokosmos*, Bd. iii. p. 531 ff.; *Metaphysik*, p. 187 f.; *Grundzüge der Metaphysik*, § 83 f.; *Grundzüge der Religionsphilosophie*, § 24. [Thinghood is used by John Grote.—G. B. K.]

reflection of the latter in a perceiving, cognizing mind. "Outside of us there exists an indefinite number of real beings capable alike of acting and being acted upon," separated from and related to each other, not by space, but by the difference of their nature. They may be compared to the tones of a harmony, which are both distinct and united, though neither spatially. It is our soul that first translates the impressions received from them into the language of spatial intuition, in which the "intelligible" (*noumenal*) relations of things are symbolically expressed. The various modes of relation of the material reals, their physical activities, such as resistance, attraction, or repulsion, are, in truth, simple consequences of inner states of the things, which may be entirely akin to our mental states. Only to the mind which symbolizes them to itself in terms of its spatial intuition do they appear to be something apart, something foreign to the mental life.<sup>1</sup> A phenomenon, therefore, is not an objective appearance of things, but a symbol thereof, existing exclusively in us. And this said symbol is not an image of the thing itself. Our knowledge is no reflection of objects.<sup>2</sup> "Sensible qualities afford no knowledge of any objective properties of things; no one of them can be an image or copy of things; none of them can be anything more than a result of their action on us." "Sensuous perceptions, as, for example, colour, are all of them merely the subjective forms in which a stimulation of our own nature, due to external influence, presents itself to consciousness." Perception never represents or images anything real. Even the modes in which the various sensations are linked to each other, whether of coexistence or succession, even they give us no information with regard to definite relations between the individual real things. For the general forms of space and time, of which all the modes of

<sup>1</sup> Lotze, *Grundzüge der Religionsphilosophie*, § 27, 23.

<sup>2</sup> Lotze, *Grundzüge der Metaphysik*, § 92.

combination of the various impressions are but specializations, are themselves only forms under which we intuit—those reciprocal conditions of things which are not in themselves open to intuition at all. The world of space and time therefore is phenomenal; the reality which corresponds to it and produces it in us is unlike it. So, too, the logical laws of thought are nothing more than ways and forms of the activity of our reason; that is, our soul is “so constituted by nature,” that when different representations in various relations present themselves in consciousness, “this very variety of representations becomes a stimulus to establish between them an inner connection; for example, to regard the content of the one as the *cause* of that of the others, and so forth.”<sup>1</sup>

§ 32. *As in Kant's system, so in that of Lotze, thing-in-itself and phenomenon are separate; the former therefore is unknowable.*

From what has been advanced, it is clear that in Lotze's philosophy the thing-in-itself (the noumenon) and the phenomenon are as completely dissociated as in that of Kant. It is not a fact that in phenomena we cognize things as they are in themselves. A phenomenon is not an appearing of the thing itself, but is the product of the activity of our senses, of which the influence of things outside us is merely the occasion. The entire process of knowing, through which our mind passes, though undoubtedly called into existence by external influence, by a stimulus which acts on our sensitivity, is constituted exclusively by factors which belong to ourselves. That which is given for cognition is not the stimulus experienced by the faculty of perception; it is not the stimulus itself that we know, but merely the sensation to which the stimulus gives rise. The sensation itself, the sensuous

<sup>1</sup> Lotze, *Grundzüge der Metaphysik*, § 77.

perception in which the manifold sensations are conjoined, as well as the logical laws according to which we think what is given in perception,—all this belongs to the subject, and the subject alone. The relation which our cognitions hold to the real things is brought about by perception; but there is no reflection or image of anything real, although the reals supply the stimulus which gives rise to the perceptions. Our knowledge, therefore, is absolutely subjective. As a process, it is carried on under conditions imposed by our cognitive faculty; outside of us, unapproached by our cognition, lies the world of real things.

But if the thing-in-itself (noumenon) and phenomenon are thus divorced, the thing-in-itself must be unknowable. Lotze accepts the doctrine of the subjectivity of sensuous perception. We cannot, he says, see things as they are, that is, as they are when we do not see them,—as they are in themselves, and apart from observation. We never see them save as they look, when we see them—as they are for us the lookers.<sup>1</sup> Still further, he maintains our knowledge is throughout subjective; it is knowledge which always misses its object; the value of which must not be supposed to lie in its agreement with the objective state of things.<sup>2</sup> So that not only are we unable to see things as they are when we do not see them, but we cannot even know them as they are when we are not cognizing them. To wish to know things as they are in themselves is accordingly an intrinsic contradiction, seeing that our cognitions are subject to conditions of knowledge inherent in the very nature of the faculty of cognition. The attempt to arrive at knowledge that transcends the conditioning factors of our cognitive powers is as irrational as to attempt to dispense with the senses in sensuous perception, that is, to see without eyes and hear without ears. Any knowledge we possess of things consists not in their entering

<sup>1</sup> Lotze, *Metaphysik*, p. 182; *Grundzüge der Metaphysik*, § 85.

<sup>2</sup> Lotze, *Grundzüge der Metaphysik*, § 85.

into us, but in their working upon us. But the products of this action being affections of our nature, owe their form exclusively to it. Every part of our knowledge, every element thereof—our sensations, the pure intuitions, the pure conceptions of the understanding—are all utterly subjective.<sup>1</sup> “Our thinking,” Lotze expressly teaches, is nothing but a process of combining in formal relations with each other the ideas which represent what we experience in perception, or in feeling, or in any other way.<sup>2</sup> But if the objects of perception and behind phenomena, to which we apply the logical concepts, do not really exist, the logical laws or concepts themselves do not cleave to real things; they are not the reproduction in thought—not an ideal reproduction—of the real relations of things themselves, but simply and solely subjective determinations of our mind. A cognition of things-in-themselves is therefore not only as regards our sensitivity, but also, in view of the very nature of the laws of thought, an impossibility and an inherent contradiction.

But if the cognizing mind is thus isolated with regard to objective actuality, little importance can be attached to Lotze's assurance that faith is certain of the existence of agreement between actuality and the necessary laws of thought.<sup>3</sup> After it has been made clear that the laws according to which we think things do not adhere to things, are not the laws of the things themselves but subjective determinations of the mind, inevitable habits of our intellectual organization, it would be a contradiction to assume that the two are in harmony; for that would be to represent the laws which control our thinking of things as laws of things themselves, which was previously shown not to be the case. Lotze takes up the position that things do not enter into us but act upon us, at the same time insisting that the effect which they produce in us is determined by the peculiar nature of our intellectual organiza-

<sup>1</sup> Lotze, *Grundzüge der Metaphysik*, § 79.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* § 89.

<sup>3</sup> Lotze, *Metaphysik*, p. 183.



tion. As part of the latter, must be counted the logical laws of thought no less than the capability of sensation and the form of sensuous intuition. If after demonstrating that what perception images or reflects is not a reality, and that the forms of sensuous intuition cannot be applied to things-in-themselves, it would be futile to put forth a firm belief in the agreement of our intuition of space and the perceptions of sense—for example, colour and smell—with the outward actuality; it would be no less futile to assume that the laws of thought have any validity outside of us, after having shown that the action of things upon us does not give rise in our mind to a reflection of the objective relations between the said things. Lotze grounds his assertion of the thoroughly subjective character of all our knowledge on the fact, that the effect produced on us by things is determined by the constitution of our own faculty of cognition, the presupposition being, of course, that the laws of our cognitive faculty are different from those of the actual world; otherwise, surely, the circumstance adduced would be no proof whatever that our knowledge must be subjective. But in that case, instead of representing the agreement of the necessary laws of thought with actualities as a matter of certain faith, it ought consistently to be treated as incredible and impossible.

We cannot fall back, then, even on faith as a guarantee of the conformity between the necessary laws of mind and external realities. Things as they are in themselves remain absolutely unknowable. How, indeed, can they be cognizable? They cannot, as a matter of course, be given in sensuous intuition; otherwise they would be phenomena, and not things-in-themselves—noumena. Nor can they be reached by pure non-sensuous thought—if there be such a thing. For the laws of this same thought, according to Lotze, are simply definite modes and forms of the activity of our reason. The moment the thing-in-itself is submitted to them, that moment does it cease to be thing-in-itself and become thing for us.

By pure thought, therefore, it can never be known; for the same reason, its nature can never be ascertained by any process of reasoning from the given phenomenon. For we are not permitted to regard phenomenon as a kind of crust or shell, the kernel of which is the thing-in-itself; but merely as our representation, and as possessing no sort of reality outside of our mind; phenomenon and thing-in-itself are accordingly absolutely divorced. And as all the elements which constitute human knowledge are purely subjective, there is no possibility whatever of our attaining a knowledge of things-in-themselves.

Notwithstanding this, Lotze still seeks to achieve a knowledge of things-in-themselves. He finds that they are at any rate capable of acting and being acted on; and in the course of an inquiry as to what must be their constitution if these two things can be predicated of them, comes to the conclusion that they must be conceived after the analogy of our own soul, in other words, as soul-like beings. The illusory nature of this conclusion is obvious at a glance. For the very act of applying the subjective forms of our thought to the thing-in-itself takes it out of the category to which it is assumed to belong; there is, in fact, no possibility of saying what it is in itself disjoined from that which our mind adds to it, in the very act of making it an object of cognition. But a divorce of this kind is impossible, if for no other reason because it can only be effected by our own faculty of cognition; and on the condition that we ourselves—necessarily too—supply the very element from which we aim at disjoining the thing-in-itself.

We see, therefore, that on the principles laid down by Lotze, the attempt at a cognitive determination of what the thing-in-itself is must be regarded as a contradiction *per se*. But further contradictions and impossibilities come to light when the thing-in-itself is defined as a *soul-like* being. If our knowledge is throughout subjective, out of concord with

the objective state of the case, this must be equally true of the soul, so far as it becomes an object of knowledge. Lotze assures us, indeed, that in self-consciousness we have direct immediate experience of the ego as the vehicle of inner life; that there is an "immediate experience" in which "the distinction between me and thee is for the first time revealed and realized;" and that the form under which this experience becomes ours is that of the *feeling* of interest, of pleasure and pain.<sup>1</sup> The subject (soul), however, does not, by means of this experience, become to itself *noumenon*, but remains phenomenon, for the simple reason that it is then subjected to the form of perception which is imposed by its own organization.<sup>2</sup> Lange therefore justly laid stress on the fact that the corner-stone of Kant's *Critique of Reason* was the principle that we cannot know even ourselves as we are in ourselves, but only as we appear to ourselves.<sup>3</sup> To maintain, with Kant, that the elements of our knowledge are exclusively subjective, and, at the same time, to try to make out that we can know our soul as it is in itself, is a glaring inconsistency. If there is no path whatever by which to approach the thing-in-itself, how can it be possible for us to attain a knowledge of ourselves so far as we are *noumena*, and then be able, by means of the conception which we form of ourselves, to make intelligible the nature of things in general as they are in themselves? The barrier between us and things-in-themselves outside us, namely, the subjective character of our perceptions and cognitions, rises equally between ourselves, so far as we are perceiving and cognizing subjects, and our own essential being, ourselves as things-in-themselves. So far as the soul is object to itself, so far is it mere phenomenon; and thus it remains an unsettled question whether such a thing as the

<sup>1</sup> Lotze, *Mikrokosmos*, Bd. iii. p. 543.

<sup>2</sup> Lotze, *Grundzüge der Religionsphilosophie*, § 33.

<sup>3</sup> Lange, *Geschichte des Materialismus*, Bd. iii. p. 60 (ed. 3); cf. sec. ii. part ii. chap. ii. of this work, p. 90.

soul, considered as a thing-in-itself, as a real substance, actually does underlie the phenomena of soul-life. And even if it were the case, there is no possibility of our knowing it; its nature must remain for us an impenetrable secret. And so to endeavour to solve the problem, "What are things so far as they really exist outside of us?" by the answer, "things are soul-like beings," is simply to transfer to these said things outside of us, considered in themselves, the notion of an utterly dark and unknown something, of an object regarding which we neither have nor can have any knowledge whatever. To attempt therefore to explain the nature of one object by the analogy of another totally unknown object is futile; nothing is explained; it simply amounts to a confession that nothing can be known about either of them. How can the darkness that envelopes the thing-in-itself be illumined by the darkness that envelopes another utterly unknown object?

If, however, in this attempt at explanation the soul is viewed solely as phenomenon, not as noumenon,—in other words, if the soul is to be described as the subject of its own states only so far as it is phenomenon,—then to conceive things-in-themselves, that is, what is understood by things-in-themselves, namely, things which really exist outside of us, after the analogy of the soul-phenomenon, is to represent them simply as phenomena. Consequently that which is conceived to underlie the phenomenal, and the nature of which is to be explained and defined, is reduced to a mere phenomenon by the very mode adopted to elucidate its noumenal character: so that this attempt at explanation denies and nullifies that which it professes to explain.

Either then, in this attempt to determine the nature of the thing-in-itself, the soul is conceived as a thing-in-itself, and then nothing can be known of it, or the soul is viewed only as phenomenal manifestation; and then to transfer the conception of the soul to things-in-themselves is simply to deny to them this very character.

Still further, as it belongs to the soul as such to be capable of arbitrary action,—this at all events seems inseparable from its nature,—the same thing would have to be allowed of things even though they should be conceived as souls of the very lowest order. According to Lotze, however, the action of things on our sensitivity must be conceived as strictly determined by unchanging laws. Were it otherwise, the world of sense, which is being reproduced ever afresh in our consciousness through the action of things, could not possibly be regulated by rigid law. The causes of the action on our minds just referred to cannot therefore be represented as capable of arbitrary behaviour, consequently not as souls or soul-like beings.

§ 33. *On Lotze's principles, the whole world is therefore reduced to unsubstantial seeming.*

Lotze's position, that things-in-themselves are souls, is therefore on his own showing untenable,—is a view which, whatever its poetical, can claim no scientific value. What the thing-in-itself is cannot be defined; it remains unknowable.

But if the thing-in-itself is unknowable, the whole world, so far as it is an object of human knowledge, is mere phenomenon—phenomenon, too, in which nothing noumenal, nothing essential, manifests itself; it is, consequently, unsubstantial seeming. And Lotze is chargeable with a complete self-contradiction when following out his doctrine that things-in-themselves are souls. He further teaches that they appear to each other. For if, as he himself asserts, things-in-themselves cannot possibly appear at all, it must be still less possible for them to appear to each other.

The entire world known to us having thus been reduced to mere seeming, the question naturally suggested itself to Lotze, What then, after all, is the significance of knowledge that

never knows its object?<sup>1</sup> He would fain vindicate some sort of reality for our knowledge. The truly real in the world, says he, is the supreme good; and all apparent reality is a system of arrangements, by means of which the particular phenomena which we regard as world, and the determinate metaphysical habitudes which we bring to the contemplation of the world, are called into existence in order that that supreme good, in all its possible varieties, may be enjoyed by the mind. In other words, the objectivity of knowledge consists in this, that it is not a meaningless play of illusion, but that it presents to us a world whose several parts are linked and ordered according to the prescription of that which is alone real in the world, namely, the good.<sup>2</sup>

Here, however, one thing at once strikes us. In Lotze's view, the world of values, as far as human reason is concerned, is separated from the world of forms, that is, from nature as a whole, by an impassable gulf, or one, at all events, that has never yet been bridged.<sup>3</sup> The reality of that which is highest and most valuable is not a truth of the theoretical reason; not a truth which enters into the theoretical consideration of the world, or can be theoretically and logically established; but a connection resting on immediate certitude, an inner experience of faith.<sup>4</sup> And yet the conception of the supreme good is employed for the solution of a purely theoretical problem, namely, that of epistemology, for the clearing up of which it is invoked as a last resource. Supposing, however, that we were ready to condone the inconsistency of such a solution with Lotze's own premises, what would be gained by its recognition? Would our knowledge become more objective, because the illusions which our intellect presents to us constitute a well-ordered system, ruled by law and called into existence by the supreme good itself? It would not on that account be any the less illusion

<sup>1</sup> Lotze, *Grundzüge der Metaphysik*, § 85.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* § 92.

<sup>3</sup> Lotze, *Mikrokosmos*, Bd. iii. p. 447.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* p. 561 f.



and deception. Nay more, the deception will be all the more intolerable when it is discovered that it is practised on us by the supreme good; and that in the very act of thus deceiving us, the supreme good places itself at our disposal. Indeed, this latter is simply an impossible thought. The phenomenal world might be conceived to be for us a vehicle for the enjoyment of the supreme good, if the supreme good were indeed the ground of that world, if the world were its appearance or manifestation. But, inasmuch as the thing-in-itself can never become phenomenon, this is absolutely not the case. How, then, can that which is most real be enjoyed in and by means of that which has no reality; the supreme good in and by means of that which is only an idea of our own, and which has an illusory existence exclusively in this idea of ours? In the world of phenomena we know and enjoy nothing real—nothing but illusion. The enjoyment of illusion is as the enjoyment of a play, and may have a certain æsthetic value; but it can never supply the place of knowledge of the truth, and cannot be enjoyment of the supreme good.

We have thus found that the final expedient resorted to by Lotze for the purpose of rescuing the objectivity of knowledge is utterly useless for the purpose it is meant to serve; though it does confirm the view that, on Lotze's principles, human knowledge can in no case reflect an objective actuality. But if the very nature of human knowledge preclude it from access to real things, the character of objectivity cannot attach to it, simply because the supreme good itself begets in our minds the delusive appearance of an actually existent world. That which has no objective truth in and of itself does not become one whit more objective for being ordered in obedience to the law of the supreme good. The whole of theoretical knowledge must therefore be pronounced to be sheer illusion; and it is inconceivable that the supreme good should confer on it an objective truth which it has not in itself. On the other hand, however, if our theoretical

knowledge be proved to be illusion, it will go hard with the question as to the reality of the supreme good. What becomes of our moral and religious convictions when objective truth is denied to our theoretical thought, has been made abundantly clear in our examination of the Kantian philosophy.

But that examination showed us further what consequences affecting the question as to the reality of the thing-in-itself flow from the abstract separation of thing-in-itself from phenomenon. It is precisely the same in Lotze's case. Nothing, says he, is immediately given in the human consciousness but the inner world of its own representations. The thought of an external world is itself a pure product of our reason. Man creates for himself the notion of such an independent reality in consequence of the nature of his reason—as a necessity thereof.<sup>1</sup> But if our knowledge is through and through subjective, and does not agree with objective facts, the inferences by which we endeavour to pass beyond ourselves must, of course, in every case be subjective too. All that we can say is—we are under the necessity of representing to ourselves things external to us as really existing: inference carries us no farther. Whether the impact or the ether-undulations by which our sensitivity is affected, and to which we trace our sensuous impressions, really exist outside of us, or are merely an inner condition of our consciousness—as to this, reasoning can give us no information.

Three results follow, therefore, from Lotze's theory of knowledge: first, that we do not cognize things in and through phenomena; secondly, that we are altogether unable to know what things themselves are as distinguished from phenomena; and, thirdly, that it is problematical whether any things exist at all.

The critical realism of Lotze thus brings us back to the critical idealism of Kant, with its conception of immanent

<sup>1</sup> Lotze, *Grundzüge der Religionsphilosophie*, § 31.

truth. His theory of cognition leads of necessity to the denial of the objective truth of our knowledge, and compels him to reduce its truth to formal agreement with itself. The history of modern philosophy, too, has clearly shown that subjective idealism and denial of things-in-themselves is the logical issue of formal and critical idealism.

Lotze announced his point of view as Critical Realism. He starts with existence as something originally given, not first to be generated by our thought; and his aim was, by the examination of conceptions furnished by experience, to penetrate to that which is properly real—to the thing-in-itself. But the development of his point of view turns out to be its own disintegration: critical realism necessarily leads back to critical idealism.

### CHAPTER III.

#### THE EMPIRICISM OF THE PHILOSOPHY OF LOTZE.

In view of what was advanced in the first part of this critical study, we shall not be surprised to find that, notwithstanding Lotze's idealistic epistemology, he is also a thorough empiricist.

§ 34. *If the idealistic theory of cognition be adopted, the question arises, Why does this and no other world of phenomena present itself to consciousness?*

If an idealistic theory be taken as the starting-point, the following question at once and necessarily presents itself: Supposing the entire sensuous world as such to be a product of our mind, how comes it that just this world presents itself to us which is actually given? that just this and no other world arises in and is built up before the mind? Lotze puts this question aside. Though we do not understand, he says,

how this system of phenomena is spread out before us, we are able to appreciate its meaning; indeed, we resemble the spectator in a theatre to whom the æsthetic significance of the scenery is clear, though he may know nothing about the machinery by which the changes on the stage are brought about; and, in point of fact, would be no better off if he did.<sup>1</sup> Passing by the mechanical view of the productive causes of the process of knowledge which the reference to stage machinery naturally suggests, it is obvious that we are concerned with the phenomenal world not merely as an object whose contemplation affords us æsthetical enjoyment, but also as an object of scientific inquiry. Science seeks knowledge of truth. But consciously and purposely to content ourselves with mere seeming, would be to renounce the struggle for truth. On the contrary, the essential and necessary aim of science is to get behind seeming, and to ascertain how it happens that just this and no other world appears in consciousness. Just such a question it was which at the beginning of the century confronted Schelling, then occupying the standpoint of subjective idealism, and which led modern philosophical thought to transcend that standpoint.<sup>2</sup> The problem then was to show that the entire phenomenal world could actually be derived from the Ego which Kant and Fichte had set up as its true principle. Now that empiricism and natural science are having their day, a problem of an analogous nature forces itself on our attention; one, too, which grows necessarily out of the idealistic epistemology of Lotze and the Neo-Kantians. The task is to explain from our mental organization the phenomenal world which is recognised as a product of mind. With this question we are at once launched on a fresh inquiry into the essential nature of mind and its inner determinations; into the nature of the objective world which builds itself up before the mind; and into the

<sup>1</sup> Lotze, *Grundzüge der Metaphysik*, § 92.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Schelling, *System des transcendentalen Idealismus*, 1800.

relation between the two. The probable result of the attempt to solve this problem would be that we should be carried forward to a very different point of view. Lotze, however, refuses altogether to deal with any such problem. This world is given—it is there: why just this world and no other, is not for us to ask. Our business is to take it exactly as it is given; metaphysics have not to make, but to acknowledge actualities; to investigate the inner order of what is given, not to deduce what is given from that which is not given.<sup>1</sup> Such is the reasoning with which Lotze meets every attempt to discover the why? of the world. Yet, quite unhindered by the idealism of his theory of cognition, he speaks of the given world—a world which, be it remembered, he regards as a mere phenomenon, springing up in the finite mind—as though it had a real and objective existence. This may be taken as an involuntary and, indeed, scarcely avoidable protest of Lotze the realist and empiricist against Lotze the epistemological idealist. For the unnatural character of this idealism shows itself in this, that no one can keep it up; no one is able to carry it out with any consistency either in his scientific or his practical life. Not even Lotze succeeds in regulating the mode in which he contemplates the world by his own epistemological principles. But whether the world be regarded as merely phenomenal or as having objective reality, in either case, according to him, we have only to do with it as a given fact. Why there is a world, and not rather no world; why, if there is a world, its content is M, and not rather something else out of the wide domain of the Non-M; and, if the actual M really exists, why it is not at rest, but in motion; and finally, why, being in motion, it moves in the direction X and not in another conceivable direction Z,—all these, according to Lotze, are foolish questions—mere aberrations of thought.<sup>2</sup>

Elements originally given, he tells us, and movements

<sup>1</sup> Lotze, *Metaphysik*, p. 162 f.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 163.

originally given, are the necessary conditions of every attempt to trace the rise of the world from its simplest roots.<sup>1</sup> It is the task of science, these presuppositions being granted, to explain any given state of things out of some other state. But for this very reason there can be no explanation of the world as a whole. To ask for such an explanation would be to ask that events which *transcend* the world shall be set forth in the light of processes, by which one set of facts follows from another *within* the created world. Against this Lotze urges that "any such procedure or machinery (*sic!*) is conceivable only so far as it consists in combining for some mode of activity elements of an actuality already existent, according to the laws that prevail within that actuality. One has no right, therefore, to go on asking ever afresh, by what machinery or procedure actuality in general, actuality altogether, or the primal facts thereof, upon which depend the possibility of any machinery or procedure at all, were constituted. The first principles, and the primary forms of their activity, cannot be explained, or constructed, or derived. At the very best, all that we can hope to know is the inner order of the manifold actuality that rests on these principles. But how the principles themselves can be or work, is an idle, unanswerable question."<sup>2</sup> This is a point in connection with which the distinction between speculative research as understood by the great thinkers of former times, and the now widely-diffused mode of philosophizing, of which Lotze is a representative, is brought with decisive clearness into view. All the more profound inquirers, both of ancient and modern times, have held it to be the true task of philosophy to search after a knowledge of the highest principles—principles which cannot be reached by any mere analysis of experience, but which must approve themselves in experience, and by means of

<sup>1</sup> Lotze, *Metaphysik*, p. 162.

<sup>2</sup> Lotze, *Grundzüge der Metaphysik*, § 97.



these principles to explain the world. This task, it is true, owing to the infinitude of the subject-matter with which it is concerned, can never be adequately accomplished—no explanation of the world can ever be more than approximate; but it does not therefore follow that the task itself is other than a right and a necessary one. But when Lotze denies all knowledge of principles, he *ipso facto* excludes from the domain of philosophical inquiry the very thing that constitutes its specific characteristic—that which distinguishes it from the empirical sciences. All that then remains in the way of specific function for philosophy is the “working up” of experience. But how can philosophy examine experience without points of view which are above experience? If there are no such points of view, an examination of experience that shall lead to properly speculative results must be impossible. If philosophy renounces its highest task, that, namely, of investigating the highest problems of all human thought, it will at last be forced to confess that it really has no specific task at all—no specific content—no content which it does not share with the empirical sciences. It should therefore occasion no surprise when a philosophical writer of the present day demands that henceforth the “boundary lines between philosophy and the sciences” be altogether removed, as far as subject-matter is concerned; that the former withdraw into the special sciences and make its presence felt solely in methods of treatment in the “*habitus* of research.”<sup>1</sup> Let philosophy confess that it has nothing peculiarly its own to teach, consistency will soon force it to demonstrate its own needlessness, and to submit to the necessity of a quiet burial.

<sup>1</sup> So Paulsen in an article, “Ueber das Verhältniss der Philosophie zur Wissenschaft,” in *Vierteljahrsschrift für wissenschaftliche Philosophie*, herausgegeben von R. Avenarius, Jahrg. i. 1876, p. 47.

§ 35. *The effect which the exclusion of the question concerning the highest principles must have on the consideration of the world actually given.*

But if empiricism unconcernedly puts aside the question regarding ultimate principles as one that is at once idle and unanswerable, and if philosophy is to restrict itself to the science of the finite, of that which is actually given, and of the order thereof, what effect will this have on our judgment of the actually given world? All reference to a principle of any kind prior to the world must, of course, be strictly excluded from the scope of our investigations. If the sum-total of all things, and the determining unity of all the contents of the world, be denoted by  $M$ , then it will follow that every individual being in the world owes its being, force, and the compass of its activity to the one  $M$ , and that, too, so long and so far as is necessary to the maintenance of the equation  $M = M$ ; and supposing  $M$  to exist, there will follow from the one  $M$  for its world  $M = M$ , the series of laws and truths which are valid for that world. But if  $N$  were the first actuality and not  $M$ , then, "for the world  $N = N$  the other series of laws and relations would come into operation which would be valid for that other world." There are, in fact, no such things as general modes of relation, rights, and duties existing independently of the actual contents of this world.  $M = M$ , to which, as a matter of course, all elements must needs conform, whatever world they combine to constitute, and which therefore would be no less valid for a totally different world  $N = N$  than for the world to which we actually belong. There is no sum of ante-mundane truth which finds merely different applications in different worlds,  $M = M$  and  $N = N$ ; nor is there a supra-mundane law of right which would be as authoritative in the imaginary world  $A$ , if it were actual, as it is in the actual world  $M$ . "Prior to the world or to the first actuality, there was no ante-

mundane or præ-actual actuality" which contained in itself the rule, determining beforehand, how anything that came into existence should be and behave.<sup>1</sup> Such a thing, therefore, cannot have existed as a realm of *per se* necessary forms, holding the position of an absolute *prius*, which prescribed laws and limits for a world, however constituted, that afterwards came into existence. On the contrary, only the actual has real existence; though by its very existence it gives rise to the appearance of a foregoing necessity, just as the living body forms in and for itself the skeleton around which it has the appearance of having subsequently grown.<sup>2</sup>

Forms of thought necessarily conditioning our mode of apprehending that which truly is, may well exist; but as to essential and necessary truth and reason, which controlled the formation of the world, that exists not; there is no absolute truth; there is only relative and empirical truth. And the question why the actual world is just what it is, is one which is not to be asked. Our business is solely to recognise the fact of its being constituted thus and thus. The conception of unconditional necessity would accordingly have to be "replaced by the idea of a validity which is, as a matter of fact, universal."<sup>3</sup> What is true and universally valid for us might, however, be untrue and invalid in a world otherwise constituted. There is no such thing as an absolutely and unconditionally valid truth; and it is an obvious inconsistency when Lotze, notwithstanding, propounds the view that metaphysical truth consists solely in the forms which must be assumed by a world that depends on the principle of the good.<sup>4</sup> Such a view is inadmissible, even though advanced only for the purpose of setting a limit to metaphysics. For it takes for granted that there are necessary forms which exist prior to any actual world. But how can anything be known

<sup>1</sup> Lotze, *Metaphysik*, pp. 165 ff., 177.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 172.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 172.

<sup>4</sup> Lotze, *Grundzüge der Metaphysik*, § 93.

of these forms if all knowledge that precedes experience must be denied?<sup>1</sup> No less inconsistent does it seem when Lotze speaks in his *Logic* of truths, the universal validity of which forces itself immediately on the consciousness;<sup>2</sup> unless we suppose, indeed, that he refers to a validity which is universal solely for us. But if the conception of unconditional necessity is to be replaced by that of a validity that is universal merely as a matter of fact, we shall be taking very unsafe ground, for the question may at any moment be asked, whether experience embraces the whole of actuality?

Not even in relation to God can Lotze conceive of rules already in force, of a realm of absolute truth, by which He was guided in the creation of the world. On the contrary, even the truth in conformity to which God appears to create, does not exist till He has created. In other words, when God develops infinite activities which become an object of knowledge to Himself and to finite minds, that knowledge, through comparison of such activities, may embrace in general propositions the meaning common to them all; and these propositions, on the ground of holding good of the entire created world, may be endowed by us with erroneous universality,—we may regard them as preceding all actuality after the manner of an unsearchable fate.<sup>3</sup>

If, then, there are no truths and fundamental laws which precede the actual world, no exception can be made in favour of those universally valid truths of which Lotze says that their evidence forces itself immediately on the human consciousness. They, too, have no absolute and unconditional validity; they are either purely subjective, determined by the constitution of the human mind, or else, seeing that in Lotze's view knowledge that precedes experience must be entirely denied, they are simply abstracted from experience, and because they hold good of the whole domain of human

<sup>1</sup> Lotze, *Metaphysik*, p. 165.

<sup>2</sup> Lotze, *Logik*, p. 580.

<sup>3</sup> Lotze, *Grundzüge der Metaphysik*, § 96.

experience are erroneously endowed with absolute universality—are treated as a kind of unsearchable fate antecedent to experience. Not even to mathematical truths can we in this case concede *à priori* certainty or demonstrative evidence; and it could only be regarded as a welcome confirmation of this empirical position, when the meta-mathematical investigations of Lobatschewsky, Gauss, Riemann, led to the result that geometrical axioms are reached by induction, and under altered circumstances would themselves need modification.<sup>1</sup> The most general logical truths will naturally share the same fate. The fundamental laws of thought—the law of identity and the law of contradiction—would then lack unconditional validity, or be valid either solely for the human mind or merely particularly and relatively. For beings differently organized or a world differently arranged, these laws might be invalid. Then, too, nothing whatever can be held to be unconditionally true,—true in itself,—and the modes in which we combine knowledge lack necessity. Empiricism can thus have but one issue—scepticism. Even for the law of causation only actual prevalence can be claimed—not objective necessity. What becomes in that case of the objective truth of knowledge?

We should accordingly be thrown back behind Kant, and be landed where Kant began, namely, in the bottomless scepticism of Hume.

§ 36. *Lotze's empiricism leads to nominalism, and to the denial of the objective truth of human knowledge.*

A further characteristic of Lotze's thinking is very closely connected with his empiricism.

<sup>1</sup> See H. Helmholtz, *Die Thatsachen in der Wahrnehmung*, Berlin 1879, p. 24. *Das Denken in der Medicin*, Berlin 1878, p. 30. *Wissenschaftliche Abhandlungen*, Bd. ii. 1882, pp. 610–660. Jakobson in *Der Altpreuss. Monatschrift*, Bd. xx. p. 301 f.

The history of the Scholasticism of the Middle Ages is dominated by the controversy between Realism and Nominalism, a controversy arising out of an antagonism which has not ceased down even to the present day. There can be no doubt on which side the philosophy of Lotze would range itself. In his view, nothing of the nature of general truths and ideas can claim a validity antecedent to the actual world, or an existence *prior to things*. On the contrary, his empiricism, as well as his partial leaning on Herbart, have led to his setting a value on the particular and individual at the expense of the universal. What is the genus as distinguished from individuals? Lotze's view of the subject is clearly enough indicated where he discusses the education of the human race and the progress of the history of the world. A progress of humanity is only conceivable to him if the individual continues to exist personally; on that condition alone can the subject of progress remain the same; humanity, so far as it is capable of progress, can never be anything but the sum-total of individuals: the humanity, on the contrary, which is spoken of in contradistinction to individuals, is merely a general conception, and therefore a simple abstraction. In the act of propounding this far-reaching principle, Lotze confesses himself a nominalist. Inasmuch, further, as in his view all our knowledge is through and through subjective, the general ideas which are found in thought must also be subjective. They are solely to be found in our understanding, not in the things. Whether, then, we give attention to that which constitutes the reality in the objective being of things, or reflect on the nature of our knowledge, we arrive at the same nominalistic result—Universals have no real existence in things themselves.

From Lotze, the scientist, nothing else could be expected. The natural science of the present day ranges itself on the side of nominalism.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Note 33 in Appendix.



But when Lotze denies the objective reality of the idea of *genus*, and thus confesses himself a nominalist, a new proof is furnished of the utter inconsistency of the stress he lays on the one hand on the "universal human subjectivity of all our knowledge," whilst on the other hand he wishes to retain faith in the harmony between the necessities of thought and actualities. For nominalism denies the agreement of thought with being, and in doing so does away with the objective truth of thought, and leads to the complete abolition both of philosophy and science.

Lotze's empiricism leads to nominalism, that is, *ipso facto*, to the abolition of the objective truth of our knowledge; the Kantian idealism and subjectivism, which, as we have seen, Lotze follows, land us, too, in the same negative result. Yet the two points of view at the same time contradict each other. On the one hand, namely, in agreement with the natural sciences, he represents the given world as the sum-total of all reality, we ourselves being only a part of it; whilst, on the other hand, with Fichte, he can allow actual being only to mind, treating the whole world of things as a mere phenomenon or series of phenomena springing up in minds. Now, seeing that Lotze's philosophy is an attempt to interweave both points of view, each of which by itself, and both as conjoined with each other, are to be held for truth, we are thus involved in contradictions from which there would be no escape but for the certain conviction that the respective points of view, namely, those of realism and empiricism on the one side, and of epistemological idealism and subjectivism on the other, mutually contradict and nullify each other.

The objections which have thus been urged against the philosophy of Lotze are no bar to a cordial recognition of the importance of his intellectual work. There is every reason for doing him honour as a man of noble scientific purpose, comprehensive grasp, and one of the acutest thinkers of the

present day. The keenness of his mind is shown even in his mode of exposition. One may indeed be provoked to contradiction; but of the very passages which provoke contradiction one will be compelled to say: Here there is nothing colourless, vague, indefinite; on the contrary, all is full of character, force, clearness. One feels oneself, moreover, irresistibly borne along by the vigour and many-sidedness with which he develops his thoughts and follows out an idea once started to its final issue. His system is an attempt on the lines of natural-scientific thought, once more to come to terms with the philosophical problems which earlier times have handed down, and thus to take in hand an intellectual task which the natural sciences for a while appeared to have permanently cleared out of the way. He set about the task with a mind clarified by the method of the natural sciences; he opened out new points of view, and questions which had become crystallized in traditional forms were, through his labours, quickened into new life. It is not easy for the natural scientist who, as such, is accustomed to exact inquiries, to discuss questions which demand a far different mode of thought. But in this very respect Lotze arouses great admiration. Although the antagonism between natural science, or rather its methods, and the problems devolving on truly speculative inquiry, has affected Lotze's philosophy, by no means exclusively to the advantage of the matter in hand, yet it must certainly be recognised as one of his merits that, on the one hand, he followed out Empiricism to its legitimate consequences, and, on the other, showed that there was something in existence far other than combinations of atoms and the mechanism of natural forces. Truly to permeate the empiricism of the present day with the corrected idealism of an earlier epoch—this may be regarded as the task which he has left to his successors to accomplish; this is his intellectual legacy. And the positive significance of his philosophy lies rather in his statement of the problem than his own

defective treatment of it. But whilst the excellences just pointed out deserve ample acknowledgment, no one can fairly maintain that Lotze has succeeded in constructing a self-consistent system. Indeed, the best proof of the inner and essential impossibility of his philosophical view is the fact that even he, with all his brilliant acuteness, incisive clearness, and grasp of materials, was unable to develop it into a harmonious whole. His theory of cognition in particular is full of contradictions, and ends in Scepticism.

How sorely his philosophy lacks profound speculative substance is sufficiently apparent from his treatment of the Philosophy of Religion.<sup>1</sup> What he there propounds is in the main a lean, dry Rationalism, somewhat modified by its combination with a self-contradictory personal pantheism.<sup>2</sup>

In view of the conclusions thus reached, it can scarcely be expected that Lotze's philosophy will supply a solid foundation on which to re-erect the edifice of theological science.

<sup>1</sup> See Note 34 in Appendix.

<sup>2</sup> See Note 35 in Appendix.

## PART THIRD.

### THE THEOLOGY OF ALBRECHT RITSCHL.

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“There can be no more demoralizing and soul-deadening preparation for the study of theology than that which is based on the Critical Philosophy.” — WINDISCHMANN, *Kritische Betrachtungen über die Schicksale der Philosophie in der neueren Zeit*, p. 88.

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#### CHAPTER I.

##### THEOLOGY AND EPISTEMOLOGY.

It is now our business to examine the theology of Ritschl in the light of the results arrived at in the course of our previous inquiry.

§ 37. *The theological differences between Ritschl and the Church rooted in his peculiar theory of cognition.*

What difference is there in point of principle between Ritschl and his theological opponents, and what is the root of the difference? Ritschl has expressed himself most distinctly with regard to this question. He is of the opinion that as concerns “the formal rule for the Knowledge of religious realities or relations,” which is supplied by metaphysics, “every theologian, *quâ* scientific man, is under the necessity or duty” of “proceeding in accordance with a definite theory of cognition, of the nature of which he is distinctly aware, and

which he must be prepared to justify.”<sup>1</sup> He ascribes the opposition which his theology has encountered to the fact that “he follows a different theory of cognition, and employs a different mode of fixing the objects of knowledge,” from those which are recognised by the representatives of use and wont: he thinks that his opponents, in defending the traditional theology, start with a false theory of cognition. By endeavouring to prove this, he hopes to make clear that his opponents are completely mistaken in supposing their estimate of Christianity to be loftier than his own—a mistake into which they are betrayed by their uncritical reliance on a false theory of cognition.<sup>2</sup> He maintains, accordingly, that their objections really involve “a collision between different theories of cognition.”<sup>3</sup>

What, then, is the theory of cognition which Ritschl follows? It is customary to characterize his theology as Neo-Kantism. He himself, however, has repudiated the Kantian epistemology, and declared that he rather agrees with the theory laid down by Lotze—a theory of which he gives this summary statement: “In the phenomena which undergo changes in a limited space and a definite order, we cognize the thing as the cause of the marks or characteristics which act upon us; as the end which these same marks subserve as means; as the law of their constant changes.” Such are his own words.<sup>4</sup> Besides that, in his treatise on *Theology and Metaphysics*, he repeatedly appeals to Lotze, and links his discussion of epistemological questions on to that of Lotze.

In one respect Ritschl has placed himself in a not very advantageous position by his appeal to Lotze. As we saw before, we found him expressing the opinion that every theologian, “as a scientific man,” is alike under the necessity

<sup>1</sup> Ritschl, *Theologie und Metaphysik*, p. 38.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 30.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 43 f.

<sup>4</sup> See *Die christliche Lehre von der Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, Aufl. Bd. iii. p. 19 f.

and duty "of conducting his investigations in conformity with a definite theory of cognition, of which he is conscious, and which he must be prepared to justify." According to this, a theologian ought to be quite clear what theory of cognition he purposes to follow before he enters on the solution of theological problems: before he can regulate his procedure by it, he must, of course, know what it is, and must have first convinced himself of its correctness. The ultimate reason for the difference between Ritschl's theology and the traditional one, he himself finds in the propositions which he has adopted from Lotze's theory of cognition, and which form the foundation of his own system. But how differently does Lotze himself judge regarding the importance of epistemological questions! In the very work to which Ritschl appeals for the theory of cognition which he defends, that is, in his *Logic and Metaphysics*,<sup>1</sup> Lotze takes up a position of most strenuous opposition to all preliminary epistemological investigations.<sup>2</sup>

The pretentious discussion of theories of cognition, says he in the same connection, has very seldom led to practical results,—it has certainly never originated the methods with the exposition of which it has entertained itself. "On the contrary, the problems have themselves necessitated the discovery of methods of solution." He expresses his conviction of the "essential unsoundness of efforts" to reach a foundation of Metaphysics through the analysis of the psychological conditions of cognition. He thinks we are "totally unwarranted" "in regarding that most obscure of all problems, the problem of the origin of knowledge, and of the psychological conditions which co-operate therein, as one open to easy preliminary settlement or solution, the answer to which should ultimately determine the validity or invalidity of all, or even of individual utterances of reason." "The process of cognition and its relations to objects" must be "subordinated to those primary affirmations which reason, in the form of necessities of

<sup>1</sup> Published in 1879.

<sup>2</sup> Lotze, *Metaphysik*, p. 15 ff.



thought, imposes upon every actual event or process, as well as on the action which every element has on every other in the world of actuality." In laying down this position, all that Lotze intended was to "repeat what every speculative philosophy has felt itself bound to maintain, namely, that Metaphysics are the foundation of Psychology, not Psychology the foundation of Metaphysics."

He thus gives utterance to a very different view of the value and significance of epistemological inquiries from that which Ritschl sets forth, and which he declares to be obligatory on every theologian. Ritschl repudiates the Kantian theory of knowledge; but he attaches a value to epistemological questions which is far more in accordance with the mind of Kant than with that of Lotze. If the opinion expressed by the latter in the passage just quoted with regard to the relation of metaphysics to theories of cognition be sound, the consequences for theology cannot be doubtful. Investigations into the nature and conditions of knowledge are not to precede actual knowledge; we are not in a position to pronounce judgment on the truth of our knowledge independently of that knowledge itself; it itself must determine the limits of its own competency.<sup>1</sup> The Kantian *Critique of Pure Reason*, by failing to accomplish the task it set itself, has itself involuntarily furnished the proof that to investigate knowledge before knowing is an impossibility. Philosophy cannot be charged with the duty of criticizing the faculty of knowledge before setting itself to know objects; and that for the simple reason that the faculty of knowledge can only be tested by the very faculty (itself) whose capability of knowing is in question. To forbid knowing till the power to know has been tested, is about as absurd as to enjoin on a man not to go into the water till he has learnt to swim, or to cease eating and breathing till he shall have acquired an exact knowledge of the nature of the organs by which those functions

<sup>1</sup> Lotze, *Metaphysik*, p. 15.

are performed. If this holds good of philosophy, which necessarily regards epistemological investigations as belonging to its proper domain, how much more unnatural to stretch theological knowledge on a Procrustes bed of epistemological principles settled beforehand—principles into the bargain which are not only borrowed, but have grown up in a foreign soil, and the relation of which to the specific problems of theological research cannot be at all clearly defined in advance. In fact, all such borrowed axioms or propositions are mischievous. If theology is to hold the position of a science, it must be deduced from some one great principle, and be characterized in consequence by a unity and self-sufficiency which tolerate no borrowed propositions. The objections raised against Schleiermacher's procedure, when he introduced his *Glaubenslehre* by propositions drawn from other sciences, bear an analogous application to Ritschl's attempt to make theology dependent on the results of preliminary epistemological inquiries. It would be further incumbent on us to inquire whether a theory of cognition exists which has secured universal acceptance. Different philosophical systems advocate different theories of cognition;—to which philosophical system shall theology look for the theory of cognition which it is to follow? It must surely devolve on theology itself to decide which of the conflicting theories is the right and true one. How else could Ritschl's demand be met, that every theologian shall be prepared to justify the particular theory which will regulate his procedure? But how many obscure questions arise the moment we enter on the study of the problem of knowledge! What means does a theologian possess of answering questions which have hitherto baffled inquirers, and which do not belong to the domain of theology? What are his qualifications for thus assuming the post of umpire, and pronouncing the word that shall settle disputes? Philosophy has not yet been able to solve the problem; yet theology is to do so at the very outset, even before entering

on its own proper work. Could a decision arrived at before commencing theological investigations ever claim any other value than that of a prejudice—a judgment before judging, a mere presupposition, made plausible by the mere semblance of proof, and for which the system of theology could afterwards supply no justification?

Still further difficulties arise when we remember that Ritschl makes it the duty of the theologian as a *scientific man* to start with and establish a definite theory of cognition; the same obligation must rest therefore on every “scientific man”—on the scientific man as such. A physiologist ought not to undertake the investigation of the process of sense-perception without first laying down a theory of cognition; in other words, without to a certain extent first settling the question which it will be the business of his investigation to answer. A philosopher, too, should begin with a theory of cognition; but what theory is to regulate his procedure whilst engaged in investigating knowledge? In that case, inquiry into the theory of cognition ought to start with a theory of cognition, and so on *in infinitum*. We may well leave it to the representatives of other sciences to decide how far they are prepared to fall in with Ritschl’s demand; as far as theology is concerned, it is evidently inadmissible and impracticable.

We may regard it therefore as out of the question that the theologian, as such, should be bound to pursue his inquiries under the control of a definite theory of cognition which he must first justify. This does not at all imply that theological science is indifferent to, and unaffected by, questions of this nature. Principles which stand in thoroughgoing antagonism to each other, and which determine the direction of scientific thought, may arise at the same time in very different domains. One cannot therefore be surprised if antinomies analogous to those found in opposed theories of cognition should embody themselves in opposed systems of theology. Dogmatism and Empiricism, for example, are opposed epistemological points

of view; and they may be found also in theology. Empiricism in theology will keep rigidly to what is given, and evince at the same time an equal inclination to thrust the transcendent truths which the Christian religion embraces into the background. Dogmatism, on the contrary, will endeavour to rise to transcendent truths; but in doing so runs the risk of losing firm empirical footing. This being an epistemological antithesis, one can understand how a theologian may come to appeal to a specific theory of cognition in favour of his theological position and views. A theological school which restricts itself to exposition of religion as it empirically exists, and evinces a tendency to exclude the essential or noumenal as contrasted with the phenomenal from the domain of theology, will naturally be rejoiced to find its procedure justified by a theory of cognition which forbids any other relation of the mind to objects than that which it itself assumes. But if the relation between the two domains is solely one of analogy, the theory of cognition could not, as a matter of fact, stand first and determine the theological procedure; but a particular mode of theological thought would come first, and the second in order would be the relation which that mode of thought takes up to a kindred theory of cognition. When a determinate method of theological inquiry begins to reflect upon itself, it will recognise the rule which it has actually followed as one which finds in a particular theory of cognition its scientific justification, and the proof of its necessity and universal validity.

§ 38. *The relation between theology and epistemological antitheses is more than one of mere analogy.*

This, however, constitutes no halting-place. The history of theology discloses a relation between theology and antagonistic theories of cognition of far deeper significance than that of mere analogy. As a matter of fact, epistemological questions

have at different times exercised a decided influence on the form assumed by theological sciences. It was, for example, the antithesis between realism and nominalism which in the Middle Ages divided the scholastic theology into two hostile camps. At present we are living under the influence of the reformatory impulses which Schleiermacher gave to theological science; but his own theology was developed under the influence of the Kantian theory of cognition.<sup>1</sup> These facts are but exemplifications of a relation which is based on an inner necessity, arising out of the very nature of the case. Every theologian approaches his own scientific work with certain formal conceptions, which, so far as they determine the method of knowledge, are of an epistemological nature; and though not produced and first sanctioned by theology, are applied to the objects to whose investigation it is devoted. Inasmuch, however, as form and content cannot possibly hold a relation of indifference to each other, but the content itself is modified according to the way in which it is viewed, the form in which it is presented, these formal conceptions which precede theological inquiry must necessarily have an influence on the matter of theological knowledge, and, according to their nature, may lead either to a true or a false apprehension of the objects investigated. And what is the inference that may be drawn from the view presented of the relation of theology to epistemological questions? Not, indeed, that the theologian is under the necessity of first establishing the correctness of the theory of cognition, according to which he intends to proceed; for this is impossible, besides contradicting the essential nature of theology. Nor, on the other hand, can the relation between the two be that of mere analogy; because, as we have seen, the epistemological maxims which a theologian adopts will necessarily tend to mould his theological investigations. What, then, is the relation of theology to theories of cognition? It lies beyond

<sup>1</sup> See Note 36 in Appendix.

the limits of this treatise to discuss the subject thoroughly; but we must endeavour to discover, and very briefly to define, at all events negatively, a point of view which may enable us to pronounce some judgment on it.

We, for our part, can only look for it in that which, for a theologian, is the absolutely certain and settled, to wit, in the very essence of Christianity itself. Christianity, as personal fellowship between God and humanity, mediated through Christ, is for the theologian immediately certain truth: it is fixed and settled in virtue of the self-certitude which appertains to the Christian consciousness as such. What Christianity is or is not, is accordingly a question the answer to which cannot be made to depend on epistemological investigations. We should have to abide by this canon even if the position of these same inquiries were less uncertain than, as a matter of fact, it is at the present moment. The effort to do justice to epistemological inquiries must be subordinated to the specifically theological interest of guarding the essence of Christianity. If theology is the science of Christianity, Christianity must be presented by it in a manner corresponding to its essence as immediately certain. Epistemological assumptions, the result of which would be a view and presentation of Christianity foreign to its proper nature, must be repudiated by theology as contradictory of the essence of Christianity. In acting thus, it does not quit its own proper domain: its business is not to arbitrate between opposed theories of cognition, and to solve the problems with which they are concerned; yet in one respect it cannot but take up a determined attitude towards them—its plain duty is to put aside every theory of cognition, under the influence of which the science of Christianity must needs change the very nature of Christianity itself.

In forming a judgment of the theory of cognition, to which Ritschl has given in his adhesion, we shall have to be guided by this principle. The task thus devolving on us is to ascer-



tain whether the mode in which that theory makes Christianity an object of knowledge is compatible with the essential nature of Christianity itself.

## CHAPTER II.

### RITSCHL'S THEORY OF COGNITION.

The fittest way, as it would seem, to accomplish the task devolving on us as the result of the considerations advanced in the last chapter, will be to examine Ritschl's theory of cognition, first of all on its own merits, and explicitly to develop the consequences it implicitly contains. We shall thus be able to see the relation in which it stands to the essence of Christianity. But before criticizing it, we must determine exactly what it is.

We have already remarked in general, that Ritschl on this point professes himself an adherent of Lotze. Appealing to Lotze, he teaches that we know things in their phenomena. This seems a very plausible formula. All the difficulties which arose in the way of the Kantian theory of cognition, in consequence of the distinction drawn between thing-in-itself and phenomenon, seem to be thus escaped. But how are we to understand this formula? We are said to know things in their phenomena. Things and phenomena are consequently distinguished. Phenomena are not the things themselves, even though we know the things in the phenomena. What then is the relation between thing and phenomenon? Is it this—that things present themselves in phenomena as they are in themselves? But Ritschl himself forbids our viewing the matter thus; he prohibits our supposing that on the ground of phenomena we may presume upon having gained a knowledge of things as they are in themselves. Do things then remain above and outside of the phenomena? If they

do, how can we know them *in* the phenomena? Nay, even further, Ritschl has told us that the thing-in-itself is merely a formal conception.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, we are also instructed that things ought to be conceived after the analogy of our soul. But if we are to conceive of things as soul-like, that is, as real after the manner of our soul, how can we at the same time hold them to be merely formal conceptions? And if the thing-in-itself is a merely formal conception, what remains that can be said to manifest itself in phenomena? *i.e.* to appear in appearances? What is the subject that appears? The noumenon in the phenomenon? What is that we know in the phenomenon? Are the things which we cognize in phenomena nothing but formal conceptions? If this is not Ritschl's opinion, what is the relation between the thing-in-itself which we cognize in the phenomenon, and that thing-in-itself concerning which Ritschl says, "it is merely a formal conception"?

In order to get the answer to these questions, we must examine his theory of cognition a little more closely.

### § 39. *Examination of Ritschl's theory of cognition.*

He distinguishes *three forms of epistemological theory*. The *first* he terms Platonico-Scholastic, which he defines as the theory that the thing-in-itself abides as an unchanging, identical unity, behind the marks or qualities through which it acts upon us. Ritschl considers that this view of the subject makes it impossible for us to understand the phenomenal marks as marks of the thing-in-itself separated from them. When, therefore, Kant declared the thing-in-itself, or the things-in-themselves, to be unknowable, he pronounced a correct judgment on the Scholastic explanation of the thing. But with regard to Kant's restriction of the knowledge of the human understanding to the world of phenomena, which is

<sup>1</sup> *Theologie und Metaphysik*, p. 18.

the *second* form, Ritschl remarks that a world of phenomena can only be "posited" as an object of knowledge on "the supposition that in them something actual, namely, the thing, really appears to us, or becomes the cause of our sensations and perceptions:" otherwise, "it must be treated as mere show and seeming." By the employment of the conception of phenomenon or appearance, therefore, Kant contradicts his own position, "that actual things are unknowable." A *third* form of the theory of cognition is that of Lotze:—"In the phenomena which undergo changes in a limited space, in limited compass, and in a determinate order, we cognize the thing as the cause of the marks by which it acts on us; as the end subserved by the marks as means; as the law of their constant changes." This is Ritschl's own reproduction of Lotze's theory of cognition, and to it he gives in his adhesion.<sup>1</sup>

According to the context, the thing which he maintains we know in the phenomena—appealing in support of his view to Lotze—can be nothing else than the actual thing. For it is only on condition of its manifesting itself in the phenomenon that we are saved from the necessity of treating phenomena as mere seeming. Now, comparing Ritschl's judgment on Kant's theory of cognition with what, according to his representation, Lotze teaches and he himself approves, we are warranted in stating his (Ritschl's) own view as follows:—Actual things are knowable, but only in phenomena, not as they are in and by themselves (not in their *inseity*):<sup>2</sup> the thing-in-itself remains uncognizable. If this is correct, he may be said to distinguish actual things which we cognize in phenomena from things-in-themselves which we cannot cog-

<sup>1</sup> *Die christliche Lehre von der Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, Aufl. 2, Bd. iii. p. 19 f.

<sup>2</sup> [As the Scholastics formed a substantive, *aseitas* (aseity), from *a se*, why not *inseitas* from *in se*, *perseitas* from *per se*? One of them would be the nearest approach to a rendering of the German *Ansichsein*, which is used here; a word which, with its Hegelian congeners, is next to impossible to render into English idiom so as to retain its full meaning.—Tr.]

nize. But what is the relation of these two to each other? What are these *actual* things? In what sense does actuality belong to them? There are only two senses in which they can claim to be actual—either as given in phenomena, or as they are in themselves; that is, as having an existence which is independent of our consciousness, and of the mode in which they appear to our consciousness. If they are nothing but that which is given in the phenomena, then they are identical with the phenomena; and we have the empty tautology, that in phenomena we know phenomena. Then, moreover, our knowledge is without substance and value. For if actual things are identical with phenomena, there is no actuality lying at the foundation of the phenomenal, and the said phenomenal is reduced to mere show and seeming.

Ritschl, however, as we have found, assures us that actual things are the cause of our sensations and perceptions. But by these cannot possibly be meant things in the form which they assume in our sensations and perceptions, and which is the result thereof: our sensations and perceptions would, in that case, rather be the cause of, than caused by, the things which we perceive. It is only so far as they exist prior to our sensations and perceptions, that is, so far as they have a being which belongs to them before producing any of the effects which we experience,—a being which, as it precedes our perception, must precede our knowledge,—that they can be the cause of those sensations and perceptions. But if we abstract from the objects of knowledge that which our subjective activity has added, then there remains the thing-in-itself. Consequently, the *actual things* which Ritschl deems to be the cause of our sensations and perceptions, must be identical with *things-in-themselves*.

But, as we have found, Ritschl further teaches that if actual things do not manifest themselves in phenomena, these latter must needs be treated as mere show. If actual things are the things whose existence is presupposed, if phenomena are not

to be treated as mere show, then they are that which necessarily precedes the phenomenal, and which presents itself in the phenomenal. When, however, we abstract from the objects of knowledge that which is exclusively phenomenal, we arrive at the thing-in-itself. We must therefore conclude that the actual things which, according to Ritschl, manifest themselves in phenomena, are nothing but things-in-themselves.

Still more, he himself designates the things which Kant pronounced unknowable, the *actual* things; whilst a few lines before he had made the remark that Kant declared things-in-themselves to be unknowable.<sup>1</sup> These same things which Kant considered unknowable, Ritschl defines at one time as things-in-themselves, at another as actual things. It would appear, therefore, that he deems the actual things to be the things-in-themselves; and that he is unable to uphold the distinction which he himself had posited between the two.

An inconsistency like this, occurring in the space of a few lines, shows how impossible it is to distinguish the one from the other. The things which according to Ritschl's teaching we know in phenomena, either have no real existence in distinction from the phenomena, or they possess actual, objective reality. But if these actual things are the cause of our sensations and perceptions, and are therefore that which lies at the foundation of the phenomenal, they must be identical with the things-in-themselves. Again, if the two are identical, there are only two alternatives — *either*, the actual things are as unknowable as the things in themselves, and then we know nothing actual at all, our knowledge is unsubstantial and without object; *or*, things-in-themselves, in some sense which cannot here be more exactly determined, are, like the actual things, knowable. This being the case, we should know things-in-themselves in phenomena, and the former could no longer therefore be abstractly separated from the latter; in other words, the thing-in-itself must be held to

<sup>1</sup> *Lehre von der Rechtfertigung*, etc., *passim*, see p. 19.

manifest itself in the phenomenal. We should thus have a theory that preserved the objectivity and reality of human knowledge. But this is not Ritschl's intention. Had he adopted such a theory of cognition as the groundwork of his theology, the latter would have had to undergo a radical transformation. He rather asserts the unknowableness of the thing-in-itself, yet he is at the same time anxious to hold fast the reality of the phenomenal, for he teaches that something actual is presented in it, which is different from the phenomenal and gives it reality, though it is not the thing-in-itself.

§ 40. *Ritschl has no right to appeal in support of this theory of his to Lotze—Lotze's view very different.*

In favour of this his theory, Ritschl appeals to Lotze. But we have seen that Lotze's view of the matter is widely different.<sup>1</sup> In the *first* place, Lotze recognises no distinction between actual things, which lie at the foundation of phenomena and lend them reality, and things-in-themselves. In the *second* place, according to Lotze's theory of cognition, phenomenon is something that arises in the human mind, something that belongs exclusively to the subject, occasioned indeed by the action of things on us, but not a manifestation of the actual things,—not objective, but subjective phenomenon,—the product of our own mind, in which things do not present themselves as they actually are, and by means of which, therefore, no knowledge of actual things is given to us. But, in the *third* place, the doctrine that we know things in phenomena is contrasted by Ritschl with the assumption that things-in-themselves are knowable, and the latter is denied. Lotze by no means teaches that things-in-themselves are absolutely unknowable. He maintains, indeed, that phenomena are not reflections or images of actual things, but he thinks that the thing-in-itself can be reached by inference,

<sup>1</sup> See sec. ii. chap. ii. of this work.



and comes himself to the conclusion that things are in reality soul-like beings.

In these three respects Lotze's teaching is different from Ritschl's representation of it.

Ritschl adds, however, a still more precise description of Lotze's theory of knowledge as he understands it: "In the phenomena which undergo changes in a limited space and compass, and in a determinate order, we know the thing as the cause of the marks by means of which it acts on us, as the end which, as means, they subserve, and as the law of their constant changes." But what are space and phenomenon in Lotze's sense? Space is subjective intuition, and it, no less than the phenomena which present themselves to us in space, with their changes, exists solely in us. The thing, therefore, which we cognize in the phenomena given in space has as little objective reality as the spatial phenomena in which it is cognized. Further, the marks or properties of the thing, such as red, blue, sour, sweet, and so forth, are simply states of our sensitivity, affections of sense. Consequently, the thing, too, so far as these marks belong to it, has no objective reality. On the contrary, the word *thing* merely designates a unity, which we ourselves confer on certain phenomena and qualities perceived by us, and has no real existence whatever outside of us.

Ritschl's appeal to Lotze must therefore be pronounced unwarranted. On behalf of his doctrine, that we know actual things in phenomena, he appeals to statements of Lotze in which there is no reference to things which have an objective real existence outside of us, but merely to actuality in space, which in Lotze's view, even as in Kant's, is purely subjective phenomenon.

On the one hand, Lotze lays down a different doctrine of the knowledge of actual things from that which Ritschl ascribes to him, namely, he does not teach that we know them in phenomena; on the other hand, the things to which

Lotze refers in the epistemological positions advanced by him, and to which Ritschl appeals in favour of his own doctrine, are not the actual things which the latter has in view.

Ritschl refers all who wish to gain a fuller understanding of his theory of cognition to his treatise on *Theology and Metaphysics*.<sup>1</sup> This accordingly we must now examine. We read there as follows:<sup>2</sup> "The phenomena which are perceived in a limited space-form as always coexisting or succeeding each other in the same way, and undergoing alterations within defined limits and in a defined order, our faculty of representation combines into an unity called thing after the analogy of the cognizing soul, which feels and remembers itself to be an abiding unity in the midst of ever changing sensations." According to this statement, a thing is a unity which we ourselves confer in our conception upon a sum of perceived phenomena; in other words, it is merely a represented, not an actual unity; nay more, a unity which we form after the analogy of our own soul. In support of this view, Ritschl appeals to Lotze. But when we compare the section of the latter's *Metaphysics* to which Ritschl appeals, we find a different view of the matter.<sup>3</sup> Lotze tells us there, that it is exclusively through the medium of our own soul that we learn that it is possible for a being to remain the same whilst its states are changing, as also what that means. He does not, however, treat this as an explanation of the fact that we *represent* things, so far as they undergo changes, after the analogy of the soul. On the contrary, he draws an inference as to the real nature of what we call things, in that he maintains, namely, that they are actually soul-like beings. He speaks, therefore, not of a represented unity, but of that which in his judgment actually

<sup>1</sup> Ritschl, *Die christliche Lehre von der Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, Aufl. 2, Bd. iii. p. 20.

<sup>2</sup> Ritschl, *Theologie und Metaphysik*, p. 17.

<sup>3</sup> Lotze, *Metaphysik*, p. 185.

exists, and which is the real unity of the changing states. He reasons, that "if there are things with the properties which we demand of them, they must be more than things; without sharing in a spiritual nature, they could not fulfil the general conditions of thinghood; they can only be distinct from their states if they distinguish themselves therefrom; they can only be unities if they contrast themselves as such with the multiplicity of their states."<sup>1</sup> Besides the unity of that which truly is as the universal ground of the world, Lotze maintains it to be undeniable that there are also spiritual beings like ourselves which realize the true idea of a being, because they feel their own states and contrast themselves as a perceiving unity with their own changing states.<sup>2</sup> He lays stress on the thought that things must have an existence outside the infinite; genuine, true reality is to Lotze identical with *proseity* (*Fürsichsein*, being-for-oneself); and by *proseity* he means being able to feel and assert oneself as a self.<sup>3</sup> For this reason he thinks that things must be soul-like beings; and what he says, he says distinctly regarding real things, regarding things as real unities of their states, not regarding mere representations of things. So that in this respect, too, Ritschl has mistaken Lotze's view.

At the same time, it is equally clear that he has thus taken up a position which is out of harmony with the theory of cognition expounded in his chief work, to which attention has already been called.<sup>4</sup> Sheltering himself under Lotze's authority, he laid down his own theory of cognition in the proposition that we know things in phenomena. According to the context, he could only mean thereby *actual* things; for immediately before the remark is made that in phenomena

<sup>1</sup> Lotze, *Metaphysik*, p. 186.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 186.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 190. [As was remarked above in connection with the word *Ansichsein*, so here with *Fürsichsein*, it would be easiest to render it by a Latin word formed on the model of the Scholastic *aseitas*, as above.—TR.]

<sup>4</sup> Ritschl, *Lehre von der Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, Bd. iii. p. 19 f.

something actual, namely, the thing, manifests itself; and Kant is blamed for pronouncing actual things unknowable. In the treatise on *Theology and Metaphysics*, however, in which Ritschl tells us he has more carefully discussed and given a reasoned account of the conception of the theory of cognition adopted by him, we are assured that by *thing* is to be understood a unity which we for our minds constitute out of a sum of phenomena;—here, too, he again appeals to Lotze.<sup>1</sup> The thing as such therefore, so far as it is opposed to and isolated from phenomenon, is, according to Ritschl, “a purely formal conception without content.”<sup>2</sup> How “a purely formal conception without content” can be an analogy of the soul, which is regarded as the real unity of its perceptions, is quite unintelligible. So that no sooner does he make the effort to give a more exact definition of this supposed analogy between the soul and the thing-in-itself, than he loses his hold on it. Still further, though as a purely formal conception it belongs exclusively to our understanding; yet this same thing which is said to be nothing more than a unity to which our understanding reduces any particular sum of phenomena, that is, a subjective form or mould, is treated as the subject of changing states, and is represented as “producing effects on our perception as well as on other things.”<sup>3</sup> Ritschl has neglected to show how a merely formal conception could accomplish the like of that.

But if things as such, in distinction from phenomena, are purely formal concepts, it becomes impossible to maintain their reality. Ritschl teaches that a world of phenomena can be regarded as an object of knowledge “only on the assumption that something actual, namely, the thing, manifests itself in them, or becomes the cause of sensation and perception;” otherwise, phenomena must be treated as mere

<sup>1</sup> Ritschl, *Lehre von der Rechtfertigung*, etc., Bd. iii. p. 20.

<sup>2</sup> Ritschl, *Theologie und Metaphysik*, p. 18.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 17.

illusion.<sup>1</sup> In other words, the reality of phenomena rests on the fact that something actual, namely, the thing, manifests itself to us. But what is that which appears in a phenomenon, and which we know therein? The answer is given—Purely formal concepts appear or manifest themselves therein; in other words, mere modifications or functions of our understanding. The world of phenomena is thus transformed into the shadow of concepts—concepts, too, which are not the pure essences of things themselves, as Hegel would perhaps have put it, but belong exclusively to the thinking mind. We are thus dealing with a shadow which casts a shadow of itself, and all within the domain of the subjective consciousness.

The reality of phenomena can no longer be maintained, when once the thing itself as distinguished from phenomenon is declared to be a purely formal concept. If there is nothing actual in phenomena, then phenomena, to quote Ritschl's own words, must be relegated to the sphere of simple illusion.

§ 41. *The same result follows from the account which Ritschl gives of the nature of the phenomenal.*

The same conclusion is reached when we examine Ritschl's definition of the nature of the phenomenal. He tells us: "The sensations which come to us through our senses are the first and final guarantee that things, which we perceive along with the sensation which they excite, exist or are actual."<sup>2</sup> But according to his theory of cognition, all that is given is a sum of phenomena, the perception of which is connected with a particular part of space. It is our representation and that alone that constitutes them into a unity; and this unity is the thing. "The representation of the

<sup>1</sup> Ritschl, *Lehre von der Rechtfertigung*, etc., Bd. iii. p. 19.

<sup>2</sup> Ritschl, *Theologie und Metaphysik*, p. 30.

thing," says Ritschl,<sup>1</sup> "arises from the various sensations which link themselves on in a determinate order to something that perception fixes in a limited space. An apple is posited as a round, red, sweet thing, in that the sensations of touch, sight, and taste associate themselves with the spot in which the particular relations of form, colour, and taste are perceived. These same relations, which we repeatedly perceive as meeting in the common spot, are united by us in the representation of a thing which exists in its relations, which we know only in those relations, and which we designate by means of them."<sup>2</sup> To say, "the thing is there, *i.e.* exists," can only mean that we represent it to ourselves as existing or being there. When, therefore, Ritschl uses the words, "We perceive the things," and "Things affect our sensitivity,"<sup>3</sup> he expresses himself inadequately; for the thing, as the unity of a sum of phenomena, is merely our representation—it is not that which is perceived by us; nor can it work on our sensitivity as a sensuously-perceived object. What we really perceive, namely, according to the principles laid down, is merely a manifold of phenomena; these exclusively are what is objectively given; and it is only when they are combined by our mind into a unity of representation as a thing that they come to be viewed as qualities of that thing.

If, however, we ask by what means we assure ourselves of phenomena, we are referred to perception and sensation.<sup>4</sup> Phenomena are perceived by means of affections of the senses. It must not, however, be supposed that the objects themselves perceived by us enter into our sensations. Sense experiences a stimulus which evokes its independent activity; but the sensation thus called into existence is not like the stimulus which sense experiences; it is therefore

<sup>1</sup> Ritschl, *Theologie und Metaphysik*, p. 35.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 17. See Note 37 in Appendix.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 30.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* p. 17.



not like the object from which the stimulus proceeds.<sup>1</sup> What we perceive, therefore, in sensation is not an object outside of us; but merely a something which sensation itself has produced: and this product of sensation must not be regarded as in any sense a representative image or reflection of the object from which the stimulus experienced by our sensitivity proceeded. The object of perception is exclusively the sensation itself; that is, an affection of our sensitivity, to which we involuntarily attribute objective existence. So that the phenomenon which we perceive in sensation is merely something that exists in the subject experiencing affections of sense, and outside the subject is nowhere to be found. We see, therefore, that Ritschl's own statements regarding sensation, perception, phenomenon, compel him to deny the objective reality of the phenomenon.

Consequently phenomena exist not; and things as unities of the phenomenal also have no existence. Neither the one nor the other is a reality. Nothing has real existence but the thing-in-itself; and the thing-in-itself is the only reality that is left to us.

Ritschl pronounced the thing-in-itself unknowable; but proceeds on the supposition of its reality. What, then, becomes of the thing-in-itself in Ritschl's representation of it?

#### § 42. *Ritschl's view of the thing-in-itself.*

He attempts a genetic derivation of the conception of the thing-in-itself; he endeavours to show how it is that on this mode of determining the objects of knowledge which he controverts, we come to fancy it possible to know things as they are in themselves. "The assumption," he tells us,<sup>2</sup> "that things can be known in themselves spatially behind

<sup>1</sup> Ritschl, *Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, Bd. iii. p. 22.

<sup>2</sup> Ritschl, *Theologie und Metaphysi*, p. 33.

their self-manifestation, temporally before it, is nothing but a delusive precipitate of the memory-image which remains after our first observations have been made, and is at hand before the next following observations are made; and which poses as the very reality of the thing." Starting here, he seeks to make clear the nature of a generic concept, and of "idea" as understood by Plato. "Ideas," he says, "are merely universalized memory-images."<sup>1</sup> "An idea, in Plato's sense, is a memory-image of a number of things which as to the majority of their marks are alike, in other words, of things of the same kind—it is a generic conception; but these generic conceptions formed by us are supposed to be the things in the proper sense; and the things perceived by the senses only exist so far as they participate in the ideas." Plato thus actually leads the way to conceiving of things-in-themselves apart from what they are to us as individual phenomena. "But ideas as universalized memory-pictures become paler, more indefinite, yea, even more fluctuating," "the greater the number of examples or subordinate species which they are deemed to represent or embrace." Is, then, the idea of an apple, he asks, a determinate and clear representation? The expectation that we can "arrive at fixed and clear knowledge by means of generic conceptions is a self-delusion." In proportion as a generic conception acquires firm and clear outlines, in that proportion "do we become convinced that it is merely a shadowy image of actual things deposited in memory, whilst it itself is devoid of reality."<sup>2</sup>

The assumption, therefore, that we are able to know things-in-themselves, Ritschl derives from a faulty use of the memory-image; from the circumstance, namely, that we represent to ourselves the memory-image, in which repeated perceptions of a thing are gathered up and fixed, as existing "in a spot of space of its own, behind the particular space which is filled

<sup>1</sup> Ritschl, *Theologie und Metaphysik*, p. 35.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 34 f.

up by our direct intuition of the thing.”<sup>1</sup> But this deduction reveals to us also at the same time the origin of our idea of the thing-in-itself: it originates, namely, in our placing the memory-image behind the thing perceived in direct intuition, and conceiving it to be the veritable actual thing itself. With the explanation, however, the thing-in-itself is completely emptied of reality, and declared to be an idea due to the perverse use of a memory-image.

Nor is it difficult, further, to see that it is a mistake to identify the thing-in-itself with the memory-image and with the idea of Plato. The Platonic idea is a transcendent conception, in so far as it oversteps the limits of experience: the thing-in-itself is a *transcendental*, not a transcendent, conception; for it serves to explain the possibility of experience.<sup>2</sup> The thing-in-itself, in Kant's sense, is that which lies at the basis of the phenomenon—which never becomes manifest or appears: the idea is that which is above any given actuality, which is reflected in the actuality. Consequently, the thing-in-itself is not the same as the Platonic idea. Still less identical with one another are the thing-in-itself and a memory-image; for, whilst the thing-in-itself is that which remains over from the objects perceived and observed after we have abstracted all that is derived from our own faculty of cognition, the memory-image is that which is abstracted from the objects of perception themselves. That which *precedes* all

<sup>1</sup> Ritschl, *Theologie und Metaphysik*, p. 33.

<sup>2</sup> [Kant says: “I apply the term *transcendental* to all knowledge which is not so much occupied with objects as with the mode of our cognition of these objects, so far as this mode of cognition is possible *à priori*” (Kant's *Critique*, etc., Meiklejohn's translation, p. 16). Of Plato's ideas he says: “Plato employed the expression idea in a way that plainly showed he meant by it something which is never derived from the senses, but which far transcends even the conceptions of the understanding, inasmuch as in experience nothing perfectly corresponding to them could be found. Ideas are, according to him, archetypes of things themselves, and not merely keys to possible experiences, like the categories. In his view they flow from the highest reason, by which they have been imparted to human reason, which is now obliged to veil them by reminiscence” (Meiklejohn, p. 220 f.).—Tr.]

intuition and knowledge, namely, the thing-in-itself, is thus in Ritschl's view the same as that which *succeeds* intuition and perception, namely, the memory-image. The contradiction involved in this identification is obvious. The first question, however, is not whether this identification is warranted, but what Ritschl makes of the thing-in-itself when he thus identifies it with the memory-image. His attempt to explain and trace out the genesis of the notion of the thing-in-itself leads to the dissipation of the latter, its objective reality is *ipso facto* denied, and it is pronounced a mere shadow of the actual thing itself void of actuality.

In our examination of Kant's theory of cognition we found that, whilst he was compelled to assume that things-in-themselves really exist, his theory of cognition involved with equal necessity the denial to them of such real existence. It was only consistent, therefore, when Neo-Kantism, in the person of Lange, converted the thing-in-itself into a mere limitative conception—a necessary supposition rooted in the constitution of human thought. So, too, Ritschl's theory of cognition, after it has separated the thing-in-itself from the thing-for-us, and declared the former unknowable, has been found, upon more careful examination, to involve the denial of the real existence of things-in-themselves.

The last reality left by his theory of cognition thus *ipso facto* disappears. *Phenomenon has no existence: the things given in perception as unities of phenomena have no existence. Things-in-themselves, too, are empty shadows; they are simply memory-images used perversely—memory-images, moreover, of actualities which themselves have no existence, save that of phenomena of consciousness.*

We find, therefore, that the very feature of Ritschl's system, which he regards as its strength and as the ground of its superiority to those of his opponents, namely, the theory of cognition which lies at its foundation, turns out to be in every direction untenable. The result of that theory is the

very thing Ritschl was anxious to avoid, namely, the dissipation of the objects of knowledge into unsubstantial seeming; and it thus leads us into a path where all firm ground vanishes from beneath our feet—a path whose end is *instabilis tellus, innabilis unda*.<sup>1</sup>

### CHAPTER III.

#### CONSEQUENCES FROM RITSCHL'S THEORY OF COGNITION AFFECTING HIS THEOLOGY.

It has been demonstrated that Ritschl's theory of cognition is an impossibility. Subjected to examination, it has revealed its own untenableness. No interferences, no objections, no arguments from without were needed for the purpose. The logical development of its own content was its refutation. The several moments which it comprised, when brought face to face with each other, contradicted each other. We might well therefore now ask, What can become of a theology which is based on a theory of cognition that issues at last in sheer negation? With this question we should have reached the end of our inquiry; for it is clear that, to the extent to which this theory is consistently thought out, to that extent a theology which is based on it can contain nothing more than a phenomenology and pathology of the Christian consciousness; religious doctrines, therefore, which, whatever psychological interest they may excite, can lay no claim whatever to objective truth.

#### § 43. *The effect of Ritschl's theory of cognition on his theology.*

Were we to halt here, however, we should scarcely do justice to Ritschl's procedure. For he himself is not conscious of the nihilistic effect of his theory of cognition, nor

<sup>1</sup> Ovid, *Metamorph.* i. 16.

does he set about his theological task with this result in his mind; but with epistemological principles having a positive content, by means of which he considered himself able to set theological science on a firmer foundation, and to give it a more congruous form than it has hitherto been able to boast. The task devolving upon us is therefore clearly marked out. Having seen that the epistemological principles on which he bases his theology are essentially untenable, and lead to the total denial of knowledge, our next business is to apply them to his own theology, and to bring out the consequences which that application involves.

Ritschl starts from the position that human knowledge is restricted to phenomena, and that things-in-themselves are unknowable. This first epistemological assumption involves a second—one, namely, that affects the nature of *religious* knowledge. If we can know nothing but the phenomenal, clearly the suprasensual must be unknowable. How can religious knowledge be possible if, owing to its very nature, it is concerned with suprasensuous truth? If, then, religious truth as such is not to be impossible and objectless, it follows of necessity that it must be separated altogether from theoretical knowledge, and be grounded on the moral consciousness. *Restriction of knowledge to the phenomenal, and separation of religious knowledge from theoretical or world-knowledge*: such is the twofold methodical principle by which the character of Ritschl's theology is determined. By this it proves itself *ipso facto* to be a form of Neo-Kantism. In his theoretical philosophy Kant endeavoured to show that because our knowledge is subject to conditions which are immanent in consciousness, it can only be a knowledge of the phenomenal; and in his Practical Philosophy he shows that moral-religious knowledge is practical in its nature, and for that very reason not theoretical. These two fundamental thoughts of the Kantian philosophy Ritschl has appropriated and constituted the basis of his theology, however different may be his mode



of grounding and carrying them out. Yet we have been expressly forbidden to call Ritschl a Kantian;<sup>1</sup> to a certain extent, too, with justice. As regards that in which he differs from Kant he cannot be called a Kantian—that is true; but, then, no one has ever maintained it. As far as the fundamental ideas just mentioned are concerned,—ideas which determine the character of his theology,—Ritschl is certainly a follower of Kant. Nor must we allow ourselves to falter in this judgment because he prefers to shelter himself under the authority of Lotze. For, on the one hand, as we have seen, his appeals to Lotze are in several cases unwarranted; and, on the other, the two great principles accepted by him are principles of philosophical thought in which Lotze and Kant are agreed. Lotze, too, dissevers the thing-in-itself from the phenomenon. According to him, all knowledge is derived from experience, and phenomena are the sole objects of experience: he, too, separates moral-religious from theoretical knowledge. Lotze, however, advanced beyond Kant, to the extent of endeavouring to vindicate for the theoretical reason a knowledge of things-in-themselves; but here he is not followed by Ritschl. On the other hand, in view of the agreement between Lotze and Kant upon the fundamental thoughts in question, we can readily understand why Ritschl's chief disciple, W. Herrmann, on epistemological questions should fall back on Kant, whilst his master falls back rather on Lotze.<sup>2</sup> This simple fact, that the master should be able to follow Lotze and the pupil Kant, without either of them becoming aware of any serious difference between their respective points of view, is evidence enough, surely, of the essential agreement between the two philosophers. Indeed, so thorough is the agreement, that a disciple of Lotze has

<sup>1</sup> So Kattenbusch, in a review of a dissertation by Fricke on “*Metaphysik und Dogmatik*,” in the *Theologische Literaturzeitung* for 1882, No. 26.

<sup>2</sup> W. Herrmann, *Die Religion im Verhältniss zum Welterkennen und zur Sittlichkeit. Eine Grundlegung der systematischen Theologie*, Halle 1879, p. ix.; cf. p. 16 ff.

ventured to make the remark that his master always had been and remained a Kantian from the very first, and had had no need to go back to Kant, simply because, in the matter of his theory of cognition, he had never departed very far from Kant.<sup>1</sup> When Ritschl severs the thing-in-itself from phenomenon, and religious knowledge from theoretical knowledge, he follows the general principles of knowledge which are held in common by both Lotze and Kant. And if he imagines himself to be quitting Kant when he affirms that we know the things in phenomena, we can only reply that this doctrine of his makes no real difference; for the things which, according to him, we know in phenomena are, as we saw above, not realities, having an existence independent of our consciousness, but mere formal unities of phenomena. Nor even as to this matter is there any difference between him and Kant; on the contrary, Kant's own doctrine is that human knowledge consists in the formal combination of phenomena.

Ritschl therefore stands on the Kantian platform: like Kant, he restricts knowledge to the phenomenal; like Kant, he bases religious knowledge on the moral consciousness.

It will now be our business to consider what consequences for his theology follow from these two epistemological principles.

#### A.—RESTRICTION OF KNOWLEDGE TO PHENOMENA.

In pronouncing the thing-in-itself unknowable, Ritschl restricts knowledge to phenomena. For actual things, which lie at the root of phenomena, and are knowable in them without being things-in-themselves, do not, as we have seen, exist. So far, on the other hand, as things are conceived merely as formal unities of phenomena, they are not really different from phenomena; this also has been shown to be the case. Since then the thing-in-itself has been pronounced

<sup>1</sup> O. Caspari, *Hermann Lotze*, p. 25 f.

unknowable, nothing remains to be known but phenomena, with the formal relations which are imposed upon them by thought.

§ 44. *Limitation of knowledge to phenomena involves the elimination from theology of all claim to know the objects of the Christian faith as they are in themselves.*

The first result of this limitation of knowledge to phenomena is a demand that everything be eliminated from theology that involves any claim to determine what the objects of the Christian faith are *in themselves*. Knowledge of every kind—theological knowledge, therefore—is concerned exclusively with things as they are *for us*. Knowledge of things, says Ritschl, is always based on the “effects which they produce on us;” and “whatever calls forth in us a view of the world as a whole and a corresponding judgment of ourselves, especially the assurance of salvation, that forms part of divine revelation.” It is not permissible, therefore, to try to find out from the Scriptures what is true in itself. How could anything be held to be true which is not true for us? To treat the Holy Scriptures as though they contained what is true in itself, simply argues an unenlightened bondage to that false theory of cognition and bad metaphysic which are part and parcel of the scientific apparatus of the old theological systems.<sup>1</sup>

In conformity herewith is the form assumed in Ritschl's system by his *doctrine of God*—*i.e.* theology in the narrower sense. “If God is one of the objects of knowledge with which scientific theology is concerned, all claim to teach anything about Him as He is in Himself—anything that can be known apart from some sort of a revelation of Himself felt and perceived by us, apart, that is, from what is a revelation for us—is devoid of adequate reason.” When, therefore,

<sup>1</sup> Ritschl, *Die christliche Lehre von der Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, Bd. iii. 1st ed. p. 357.

Frank defines God as the absolute, and Luthardt speaks of "determinations of the divine nature as it is in itself, which may be known prior to those attributes which affect or are active for us," he accuses both of them of "following the false metaphysic of the vulgar understanding, which must not be regarded as scientific truth simply because it has found a place in the manuals of metaphysics down to the days of Christian Wolff,"<sup>1</sup> that is, until it was overthrown by Kant. Ritschl's principle, however, is not merely that we can teach nothing about God as He is in Himself, apart from His revelation of Himself; but, on the assumption that the thing-in-itself is absolutely unknowable, *not even on the ground of divine revelation* can we know anything about God as He is in Himself. In His *inseity* (*Ansichsein*), in his essential nature, He is not revealed to us; all that we can say is what He is in His relation to us. In relation to us, *for us*, God is love. This is the fundamental characteristic of the divine essence. Ritschl accordingly does his utmost to show that every determination of the conception of God is impossible which would require to be thought as preceding love, or the declaration, "God is love." Every such statement regarding the nature of God would be an attempt to go behind that which God is for us, or relatively to us, and to gain a knowledge of God as He is in Himself, which, according to the theory of cognition previously laid down, is an impossibility. When God is conceived as love, "nothing is thought in Him that preceded His determination of Himself as love. Either He is thus thought, or He is not thought at all."<sup>2</sup> "Not even the recognition of the personality of God implies an independent knowledge of Him prior to His determination of Himself as the will to love, but merely gives us the appropriate form for this content."<sup>3</sup> Nor, again, can it be said that God should

<sup>1</sup> Ritschl, *Theologie und Metaphysik*, p. 31 f.

<sup>2</sup> Ritschl, *Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, 2nd ed. Bd. iii. p. 263.

<sup>3</sup> Ritschl, *ibid.* p. 31 f.

be conceived as *omnipotence*, one of the attributes of which is love to the Church of His Son; but that God is "Love, which has the attribute of omnipotence."<sup>1</sup> So, too, the *righteousness* of God "denotes the manner in which God carries out His loving will in the redemption alike of humanity as a whole and of individual men;"<sup>2</sup> hence His righteousness is undistinguishable from His grace."<sup>3</sup> "The religious recognition of the divine omnipotence and omnipresence again always signifies that godly men may surely rely upon the care and gracious presence of God, because His world-creating and world-sustaining will is directed to the highest good of mankind." "The idea of the divine omnipotence finds its logical completion in that of His wisdom, omniscience, and the help He gives to men according to their circumstances and needs."<sup>4</sup> In treating the doctrine of the divine attributes, therefore, Ritschl does his best to show that the remaining attributes are but more exact determinations of love, and to resolve them all into the identity of the latter with itself. There is no attribute which in point of worth can be mentioned alongside of love. "Specially true is this of the conception of *Holiness*, the Old Testament sense of which is, for various reasons, inapplicable to Christianity, whilst its New Testament use is vague and indefinite." "The adequate conception of God is contained in the conception Love."<sup>5</sup>

But what do we mean when we say that God is love? According to Ritschl, it is of the essence of love to adopt the end of another's being as one's own personal end.<sup>6</sup> Now the object of the loving will of God is the kingdom of God; in other words, "the moral union of the human race through activities springing from the motive of universal love of one's

<sup>1</sup> Ritschl, *Theologie und Metaphysik*, p. 16.

<sup>2</sup> Ritschl, *Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, Bd. iii. p. 296; Bd. ii. p. 113.

<sup>3</sup> Ritschl, *Unterricht in der christlichen Religion*, 2nd ed. § 16.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* § 16.

<sup>5</sup> Ritschl, *Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, Bd. iii. p. 255 f.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.* p. 259.

neighbours;" this, too, is the end of the entire mundane development. God is therefore "love, inasmuch as He adopts as His own self-end (*Selbstzweck*) the training and organization of the human race into a kingdom of God as the supra-mundane end of man himself."<sup>1</sup> The end for which the world exists, and the end God Himself sets before Himself as His own end, are therefore one and the same, namely, the Kingdom of God. If, then, God wills the end which He set before Himself as His own end, in a word, His self-end, He *ipso facto* wills the kingdom of God as the end for which the world exists. In the same act also He wills the physical world as the means and condition of the establishment of this kingdom. Ritschl thinks he has solved "the problem of the world" by means of the conception of love, in other words, that he has reached a derivation of the world from God; whilst he "accuses the theologians of the old school of being so under the influence of the Areopagita's conception of God that they do not venture to posit actual fellowship between God and men."<sup>2</sup> It is quite true, too, that he does assume a closer relation between the world and God than the doctrine of the Church permits. For in his view the essential nature of God, so far as He is love, demands that in willing Himself He shall will the world, inasmuch as the end of the world is His own self-end.

But this involves the sacrifice of the divine freedom relatively to the world. For what is this world-end of God? Ritschl gives for reply in another connection: "God can be conceived as will only in conscious relation to the end which He Himself is."<sup>3</sup> Consequently God is to Himself the end to which His will is directed; the self-end of God is God Himself. But if God's own self-end cannot be realized apart from the world-end, and if He Himself is His self-end, then God Himself is not realized

<sup>1</sup> Ritschl, *Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, Bd. iii. p. 263.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 253.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 257.



without the world-end. Therefore God is not the one who is an eternal actuality in Himself; He cannot be conceived as having actual being apart from the world. It might, indeed, be urged on Ritschl's behalf, in opposition to this reasoning, that God must surely actually be something in Himself before he could identify His self-end with the actualization of the world-end, in other words, before His loving will could be directed to the establishment of the kingdom of God; but this plea is not available, for he expressly tells us that when God is conceived as love, "nothing is thought as belonging to Him which He could have been, or which could have belonged to Him, before He determined Himself as love. Either He is thought thus, or He is not thought at all."<sup>1</sup> It is consequently impossible to conceive of God as having any form of being that preceded the will of love, directed to the establishment of the kingdom of God, as to the end of His own being. But if God's own end is God Himself, and by consequence that in which God Himself finds His realization, then so far as God is the will of love, so far is He not yet actual being, but merely the will to be—a kind of being before being; in other words, the potency of His own being, and the will to actualize Himself. His own being, however, only becomes a reality in the realization of its end, in so far, namely, as the end of the world is His own end. It is quite obvious that a will of love conceived after this manner is not conceived as a *free* will; it is rather the necessary volition of that being of which it is the potency: nor, again, can personality be predicated of it, for personality is simply the notion which provides a "form for its proper content," since the power of free self-determination, which is the specific content of this conception, without which it is nothing, would be wanting to it. But if God is not realized save along with the world, that is, save in the realization of the end of the world, the inference is not that the creation of the world must

<sup>1</sup> Ritschl, *Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, Bd. iii. p. 263 f.

be conceived as a necessary and eternal act; on the contrary, the very idea of creation is thus swept away; for God had no existence without the world, and could not therefore create before there was a world. To speak of the creation of a world with such presuppositions, on such principles, is alike illogical and self-contradictory.

It is true, indeed, that when Ritschl tells us that God is love, in that He has taken up the end of the world into and made it a constituent of His own self-end, the aim or end of His own existence, it might seem as though the end of God's being were in some sense different from that of the world's end, and that the latter was something superadded to the former. But nowhere is anything said touching a content of the divine self-end, different from that of the end of the world. On the contrary, we are expressly told, told moreover without qualification, that God "adopts as the end of His own being the training of the human race unto the kingdom of God." "The thought of the kingdom of God is the content of the end and purpose of God Himself;" "the end and purpose of God's own existence are expressed in the kingdom of God." Nay more, Ritschl himself forbids the supposition that the end set for God's own existence can contain anything that is not included in the end for which the world exists; for he tells us that nothing must be conceived to have been in God prior to His will of love, that is, prior to the direction of His will to the establishment of the kingdom of God.<sup>1</sup> But if this be the case, it is incorrect to speak of the purpose for which the world exists being taken up into the purpose for which God Himself exists; for the two are identical: the purpose or self-end of God is the kingdom of God; and the conception of God has no content beyond the will to produce the kingdom of God.

<sup>1</sup> Ritschl, *Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, Bd. iii. p. 259.

§ 45. *The application of Ritschl's conception of love to God involves a development of the conception of God that does away with the conception of love.*

Ritschl having first laid down the general idea of love, which is to adopt the end of another's existence as that of one's own—the assumption of the former into the latter—"applies it to God."<sup>1</sup> But in so applying it, he initiates a development of the idea of God which destroys the very conception of love on which it was based. It becomes evident, in point of fact, that the conception of God has no content other than this—that God is the causative volition of the purpose for which the world exists. But if this is the sole content of the conception of God, it is inadmissible to speak of an assumption of the purpose of the world's existence into the purpose of God's own existence. That could only be if the purpose of God's own existence included something more than was included in the purpose of the world's existence. In this case it would be possible to say—God adopts into the purpose of His own being a purpose which did not form any essential part thereof. But if the sole and exclusive content of the conception of God is the idea of God as the efficient cause of the realization of the end of the world, what can there be in God which can be conceived as taking up the end of the world into itself? As far as love is the true idea of the divine essence, so far is it, on this view of the matter, lost to us, inasmuch as we were taught to think of love as consisting essentially in adopting another's end as our own personal end. God is love:—this is the fundamental feature of Ritschl's doctrine of God; but when he comes to develop his doctrine of God, the outcome of his reasoning is the contrary proposition that God cannot be conceived as love. In other words, his argument lands him in a result the very opposite of that

<sup>1</sup> Ritschl, *Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, Bd. iii. p. 255.

which he intended. His purpose was to show that God must be conceived as love and nothing else; what he actually succeeds in showing is that God cannot be conceived as love at all.

We have at the same time also lost our hold on the personality of God. For, according to Ritschl, the recognition of the personality of God must not be regarded in the light of a "knowledge independent of and prior to the definition of God as the will of love, but merely as providing the form for the contents of this same definition."<sup>1</sup> If God is not love, He cannot therefore be conceived as personal. All that in that case remains as the content of the conception of God, is the will to produce the kingdom of God in the world—which will, however, must not be conceived as love, or as personal will.

But what then becomes of the conception of God? What relation is thus posited between God and the world?

The world is a sum of conditions on which depends the establishment of the kingdom of God; or, as Ritschl expresses himself, the world as a whole is "the condition of the moral kingdom of created spirits."<sup>2</sup> But God is the will to produce the kingdom of God as the end of the world; and therefore also to give existence to the means which subserve the realization of this end. But if God is conceived exclusively as the will to produce what actually exists in the world, the conception of God has no other content than the conception of the world.<sup>3</sup> When we think God, we think that which is thought in the conception of the world, the content of the two conceptions is one and the same, first being thought in God, and then in the world;—In God as an actuality that is willed; in the world as an actuality realized. Or rather, the order is reversed. For we arrive by reflection on the world as actually given, and on the kingdom of God in the world at

<sup>1</sup> Ritschl, *Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, vol. iii. p. 255.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 261.

<sup>3</sup> See Note 38 in Appendix.

that which God is ; we think back into God, as it were, what we first thought in the world ; and God is accordingly represented as the will to produce that which actually exists in the world. But will is only conceivable as an attribute of a subject that wills ; and Ritschl forbids us positing any such subject in logical priority to the divine volition. For nothing must be thought in God "prior to His self-determination of love," prior to the relation of His will to the concrete purpose or end of the kingdom of God. "If it be held necessary to think God after the analogy of a human person, first, as the endless being, or as the indeterminate person, or as the quiescent character, who would Himself take the step forward to determine Himself as love, what is thus thought is not God." "God must either be thought as love in the relation of His will to the concrete purpose of the kingdom of God," or He is not thought at all.<sup>1</sup> God is therefore not to be conceived as subject, which determines itself as will of love, and of which the will of love is to be predicated. The will to call into existence an as yet non-existent actuality, can only be conceived as something real so far as it is the will of a real subject : if no real subject exists, of which will is the function, will itself is nothing real, and the idea of such a will resolves itself into the thought of a mere potence, of the mere possibility of the actuality that follows after. But then it would be impossible to understand how the possibility in question could ever become actuality. For potence does not possess in and of itself the power of passing into *actus*.<sup>2</sup> That which is mere potence can only be lifted into actual being by means of an already existent actual being. If there is nothing besides the potence of being, the potence will always remain potence and nothing more. Following the path traced by Ritschl, therefore, it is impossible for

<sup>1</sup> Ritschl, *Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, vol. iii. p. 263. See also Note 39 in Appendix.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Aristot. *Metaphys.* lib. xii. cp. 6.

us to show how the world can owe its existence to God. On the contrary, according to the premises with which he starts, it must ever remain a mere possibility, it can never pass out of the region of potentialities. But what is the use of a possibility which explains nothing, and from which no actuality can be derived? Very little is surely done for the explanation of the world, by first laying down in thought the possibility of that which actually exists—a possibility, moreover, with regard to which we are obliged to confess that it can never pass into actuality. On the contrary, Ritschl's attempt to derive the world from God, judged by his own principles, shows the world to be something incapable of any derivation; shows, further, that there is no reality above or prior to the world, and that the world is the only reality, the sum-total of all reality. A possibility, however, which cannot be viewed as the possibility of something actual, is not a real possibility, but a mere abstraction, a mere representation—nay more, one that is otiose, useless, and to be rejected by any thinking that aims at understanding actualities. Nothing real is left, therefore, of Ritschl's conception of God. He himself reproaches his opponents with a Neo-Platonic confusion of the divine and the mundane, and with vain attempts to discover in a conception of deity, which is “merely the shadow of the world,” a guarantee of the Christian knowledge of God.<sup>1</sup> Whether this charge is well founded must now appear very doubtful; as also whether Ritschl has formed a correct estimate of the said Neo-Platonic conception of God. But that his own conception, as soon as it is subjected to a more exact analysis, loses all real content and becomes a mere shadowy double of the world, must be clear enough after the critical examination which we have completed. If Ritschl is right, Christian theology must give up all pretence to knowing a God who is God in Himself, and content itself with a God who is a God for us. What a God thus con-

<sup>1</sup> Ritschl, *Theologie und Metaphysik*, p. 35.



ceived is, we have already shown: He is not the living God, but the shadowy reflex of the world.

§ 46. *The unsoundness of Ritschl's doctrine of God may be shown from another point of view.*

Equally untenable is Ritschl's doctrine of God found when examined from another point of view. According to his teaching, the "formally correct expression of theological propositions" is "dependent on our method of procedure in determining the limits of the objects of knowledge, that is, on the theory of cognition" which we adopt. "A theory of cognition of the compass here intended is equivalent to the doctrine of thing and things which forms the first part of metaphysics." A doctrine of the thing is put to "formal use in theology, as supplying a method of fixing the objects of knowledge and of interpreting the relation between the plurality of their marks and the unity of their subsistence."<sup>1</sup> According to this, "the doctrine of the thing and of things" supplies the formal rule for the treatment of the doctrine of God. Our author controverts the notion which he regards as the Platonico-Scholastic one, "that whilst the thing *works* on us and calls forth sensations and representations by its changing marks, it itself *rests* behind its marks as the unchanging, selfsame unity of qualities or attributes." "The simplest example of this view in the Scholastic theology, is the distinction drawn between the nature and attributes of God, on the one side; and, on the other side, the action of God on the world and in the salvation of humanity. The characteristic peculiarity of this position is that it professes to know the thing as it is in itself prior to its workings. Those who believe in such knowledge have forgotten or overlooked the fact, that the thing-in-itself is simply the memory-image left in the mind by repeated observation of workings

<sup>1</sup> Ritschl, *Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, vol. iii. pp. 15, 18

which have constantly affected sensation and perception in a definite part of space.”<sup>1</sup> What, on the contrary, Ritschl’s “doctrine of thing and things” is, may be learnt from the treatise on *Theology and Metaphysics*. “The idea of thing,” he tells us there, “arises from the various sensations which associate themselves in a definite order with something which perception assigns to a definite position in a limited space.” The relations of form, colour, taste, which meet in a common place, after reiterated perception, “are combined in the notion of a thing which exists in its relations, which we know only in them, and which we name by their means. The relation of the marks in question, thus fixed or settled by our sensation, to the thing, which we express in the judgment, ‘This thing is round, red, sweet,’ signifies that we know the subject of the proposition solely in its predicates. Could we leave them out of view or forget them, the thing which we had come to know in and by these marks would cease to be a matter of knowledge.”<sup>2</sup>

From the context in which this discussion occurs, it is clear that a general epistemological principle is being laid down—the principle, namely, that a *subject is knowable only in its predicates*. As a thing can be known solely in its appearance or phenomenon, not in itself; so, according to Ritschl, a subject can only be known in its predicates. This seems clear enough. For if we think away all the predicates from a subject, what can remain but a something that is destitute of predicates, qualities, determinations? And how can this be said to be knowable? How can it be possible to affirm anything determinate of that which is without determinations? or to predicate anything of that which absolutely lacks predicates? No sooner do we think a predicate than we cease to think the subject as such; we already think the subject in its predicate. The proposition, “God is love,”

<sup>1</sup> Ritschl, *Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, vol. iii. p. 19.

<sup>2</sup> Ritschl, *Theologie und Metaphysik*, p. 35 f.

must, according to Ritschl, be interpreted in the light of this principle. We are quite incapable of knowing what the subject of this judgment is in distinction from its predicate; and it is inadmissible to institute an inquiry into it. We must not think of God as omnipotence or as the Absolute "behind His love;" and then represent this absolute or omnipotence, or what not, as the bearer or vehicle of the love.<sup>1</sup> We know the subject exclusively in its predicate. If we think in God anything that precedes His self-determination as love, we do not think God.<sup>2</sup>

§ 47. *It follows, further, from Ritschl's principles, that God Himself has no reality.*

But the premises laid down by Ritschl do not allow of our stopping here. We know the thing, he assures us, solely in its phenomena or in the qualities which appear; we know the subject, accordingly, only in its predicates. But what is the thing which we thus know only under these limitations? "The phenomena which are perceived in a limited spatial image, always in the same relative position to each other, and the changes in which are observed in a definite limit and order, are conjoined by our representation or idea into a unity which we designate thing, following the analogy of the cognitive soul, which feels and remembers itself to be an abiding unity in the midst of its ever-changing sensations." As understood by Ritschl, therefore, a thing is the unity conferred by our idea on a given sum-total of phenomena;—a unity, consequently, which has no objective reality outside of us, and which has no existence independently of our consciousness, but is altogether the product of our own mind. But if thing is the subject in relation to the qualities as phenomena which are predicated of it, a more exact definition is thus

<sup>1</sup> Ritschl, *Theologie und Metaphysik*, p. 16.

<sup>2</sup> Ritschl, *Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, vol. iii. p. 263.

given us of the relation between subject and predicate. Merely to say that a subject is knowable solely in its predicates, is not the whole truth; in point of fact, the subject as such in distinction from its predicates has no objective reality at all, but is exclusively an idea of our mind. What is objectively given, as having actual existence, is a sum of phenomena; the thing or subject is the unity which we by our idea give to this manifold of phenomena—of which unity we then predicate the phenomena as its qualities. We must not therefore conceive of the case as though there were first a subject, and that we then proceed to predicate certain qualities of it, but the very reverse:—first, there is a series of phenomena which in thought we conjoin into a unity, and then we proceed to attribute the phenomena to the unity as its qualities.

But even the phenomena which we predicate as qualities of the things have not a real existence, but fall exclusively within the perceiving subject; they are not something cleaving to things and inhering objectively in them, but affections of our sensitivity to which we are impelled by the constitution of our cognitive faculties to ascribe objective existence; they are the outcome of a stimulation of our sensitivity, and, as was shown above, the only place in which they exist is that same sensitivity.

But according to Ritschl, this doctrine of thing and its qualities supplies the formal rule for the determination of the relation of God to His attributes, allowance being, of course, made for the element of sense in our sense-perceptions, which is, of course, absent. The attributes which we predicate of God, and which manifest themselves in our religious consciousness, such as omnipotence, righteousness, grace, wisdom, along with the divine love as the fundamental quality of the divine essence, of which the individual attributes or qualities are, as it were, differentiations,—these attributes must not be regarded as objective determinations of the divine nature, not

as predicates which appertain objectively to God; but simply as affections of our religious sensitivity, in which we conceive of that which exists solely in religious feeling as if it existed objectively outside of us and worked upon us. God, in other words, is the unity into which we combine these affections of our religious sensitivity, and to which we refer them as its qualities. But we are no more warranted in ascribing objective reality to this unity, than to that other unity which we designate thing, and of which we predicate phenomena as qualities. Equally, however, must our states of pious feeling lack objective truth, if there is no real subject which we are bound to regard as the objective factor to which they owe their existence.

This is the inevitable conclusion in which Ritschl's theory of cognition lands us, as far as the doctrine of God and His attributes is concerned. He, it is true, teaches the real existence of a personal God; but in doing so he contradicts his epistemological principles. He follows those principles only in part—up to a certain point; and then he forsakes them. No sooner are they taken seriously and carried out to their legitimate issues, than they are found to involve nothing less than the total abolition of theology. For the issue in question is the resolution of God into subjective states of human feeling. Either this result must be accepted, or the theory of cognition of which it is the necessary outcome must be repudiated. And in that case Ritschl's entire theology, so far as it has this epistemological basis, would need to be remodelled.

§ 48. *One of the chief features of this remodelling of Ritschl's theology would be a change in his mode of viewing the relation of God to the world.*

The relation of God to the world would, in particular, need a very different presentation from that which Ritschl has

given it. If God is love, in the sense in which he uses the term, God cannot exist without the world. Hence follows a mode of conceiving the divine relation to the world which must be pronounced to be a pantheistic confusion of the revelation of God *ad intra*, which is necessary to His very nature; with the revelation *ad extra*, which rests on His free will or choice. This error is traceable to the circumstance that he constructs his conception of God exclusively from the point of view of God for us, leaving out of consideration God for or in Himself. Naturally enough, therefore, his theology is lacking in a fundamental idea which could colour and determine its character. He puts aside the idea of the absolute with contempt and manifest aversion. Going back to the etymology of the word, he represents it as signifying that which is loosed, freed from, which stands in no relations to anything else; which, in his view, is the thing isolated, without its qualities, and therefore "a purely formal conception without content." He regards it therefore as ridiculous to "proclaim the Absolute as God."<sup>1</sup> In taking this view, however, he confounds the verbal-adjective *absolutus* with the participle of the same spelling. The word "absolute," in the sense in which it is used when we speak of "the *absolute being*" or the *absolute mind*, corresponds to the adjective *absolutus*, not to the participle. The latter signifies that which is loosed, freed from; but not *The Absolute*. The adjective, on the contrary, when used in the sense to which we are referring, does not signify that which is loosed, freed from. Consequently, the interpretation of the word "absolute" as denoting what is freed, loosed from, is a mistake. The word *absolutus* in its adjectival use is connected rather with another sense of the verb *absolvere*, namely, the sense "to accomplish, to complete;" and denotes accordingly that which is complete, that which is not dependent on anything else, the

<sup>1</sup> Ritschl, *Theologie und Metaphysik*, p. 16 ff.; *Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, vol. iii. p. 221 f.



unconditioned.<sup>1</sup> Ritschl himself employs the word in this very sense when he styles Christianity "the absolutely ethical religion."<sup>2</sup> In thus describing the ethics of the Christian religion, he does not mean to say that the ethical character of the Christian religion is such as to shut it altogether out from relation to men; but that the quality of morality belongs to the Christian religion in an unconditioned, unrestricted sense; whilst the moral character of other religions is only relative. When then it is said of God, "He is the Absolute," what is meant is, that He is the Unconditioned. But that is absolutely unconditioned which, in order to be, needs no other being beyond itself; whilst it is itself the condition of all other being. If such is God, then is He necessarily the one who is complete in Himself, the self-sufficient One; and the idea that the end of God's own being is first realized through the end for which the world exists, presents itself in the light of an impossibility. God is necessarily the Absolute, and remains such, even though He freely enter into relationship, that is, freely create beings, between whom and Himself He establishes relations: everything that is advanced touching the relation of God to the creature must have the divine absoluteness for its presupposition. The Christian conception of God is not exhausted, however, when we describe Him as the Absolute—that conception includes also that we know Him as the Father of Jesus Christ, and through Christ as our Father: but absoluteness is the necessary presupposition of the Christian conception of God; it is included in it; it lies at its foundation. God would not be God if He were not the Absolute: and he who fails to think God as the Absolute, fails to think God at all. Yet it is impossible for Ritschl to admit this conception. For the Absolute as that which is absolutely independent of any other being is thing-in-itself; and thing-in-itself he pro-

<sup>1</sup> See Note 40 in Appendix.

<sup>2</sup> Ritschl, *Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, vol. iii. 1st ed. p. 18.

nounces unknowable. Consequently no place can be found for the conception in his theology. In his view, God is from the very outset interwoven with the existence of the world, and stands in necessary relation thereto; nay, such is His relation to the world, that any being of God that preceded his relation to the end or purpose of the world, is unthinkable. What is meant to be expressed by the doctrine of the absoluteness of God is thus *ipso facto* denied. It is therefore a total mistake to credit him, as even one of his opponents has done, with having rescued the divine absoluteness.<sup>1</sup> On the contrary, he treats the doctrine of God so exclusively from the point of view of what God is for us, that he loses sight of what God is in Himself. And not merely does he deny that God is knowable as He is in Himself, but by refusing to Him any kind of existence which does not involve a relation of His will to the purpose of the world, he also *ipso facto* denies that God is in Himself anything at all.

Ritschl treats the idea of the Absolute slightly. But the fundamental defect of his doctrine of God is rooted in the purely negative attitude of his theology to this very idea; which, indeed, could not but prove fatal to its truth and consistency. After denying that God is absolute or absolutely unconditioned, the only remaining conception of the divine nature was that of a relation to us; he can only think of God as existence for us, that is, as love, which first attains reality in the realization of the end of the existence of the world. But if it be asked, "What is the subject of this relation?" we receive the reply, "It is not permissible to think a subject of the relation different from the relation itself." This is a revival of the Hegelian notion of a movement without a something that moves; of a process without a subject which undergoes the process; exaggerated empiricism here meets and embraces overwrought idealistic speculation. But the

<sup>1</sup> So Haug in his *Darstellung und Beurteilung der Ritschl'schen Theologie*, p. 81.

objectivity of the relation is thus *eo ipso* done away with; for a relation to us without a something which is related, is not the relation of being to being, of an existent to an existent; but something that falls solely within the mind—a relation of our consciousness to itself.

We see, therefore, with how little reason Ritschl appeals to the words of the Apostle Paul, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" as though they favoured the main tendency of his theology. He so separates God-for-us from God-in-and-of-Himself, that in giving up the one he is logically compelled to give up the other. God can be for us only if He is also God in and of Himself: then alone can His relation to us be a reality, if He is something in Himself apart from that relation.

How far the Reformers were from contemplating any such separation of what God is for us from what He is in Himself, no one can fail to see whose judgment is not obscured by prejudice.<sup>1</sup> Even Protestant teachers and writers who laid special stress on the necessity of a subjective assimilation of the sum of the Reformed doctrine, the transmutation of doctrine into inner life—even they were very far from intending to resolve the idea of God as He is in Himself into the idea of God as He is for us. Take, for example, *Johann Arnd*, author of the *True Christianity*: he insists on the necessity of translating objective Christian truth into the personal being and life of the Christian believer; yet had he no intention whatever of thus losing hold of that which is true in itself. He is anything but indifferent to the question what God is in Himself, or, as Arnd puts it, what God is *for* Himself; on the contrary, the power and consolation which lie for the Christian believer in the doctrine of God, depend in his view altogether on the fact that what God is in His own essential nature, that He is also for us. What is God? asks Arnd; and replies, "Nothing but pure omnipotence; nothing but pure love and compassion; nothing but pure

<sup>1</sup> See Note 41 in Appendix.

righteousness, truth, and wisdom." But then he goes on to say, "God, therefore, is not merely *all this for and of Himself*; but according to His gracious will in Christ, He is *all this for me too*. He is my Almighty God; He is my compassionate God; He is my eternal love and my eternal righteousness, in His grace towards me and in the forgiveness of my sin; He is to me eternal truth and wisdom."<sup>1</sup> In this way Arnd held firmly by the unity of what God is in Himself with what He is for us.

No one has subjected the opposite view to so keen a criticism as Ludwig Feuerbach. He maintains that to distinguish between that which God is *in Himself* and what He is *for me*, destroys the peace of religion. The idea which religion has of God "is in its view God Himself; God as it represents Him is the genuine, true God—God as He is in Himself. Religion is content with nothing short of the entire, unreserved God; it wants God Himself, God in person. Religion ceases when it gives up the essence of God; it surrenders the claim to be truth when it surrenders the possession of the true God. Scepticism is the arch-foe of religion. But the distinction between object and idea, between God in Himself and God for us, is, in my opinion, a sceptical and therefore an irreligious distinction."<sup>2</sup>

§ 49. *Ritschl's theory of cognition is further fraught with dangerous consequences for Christology.*

But Ritschl's theory of cognition leads to the most dangerous conclusions, not only for the doctrine of God, but also for *Christology*. It effectually excludes therefrom every element that involves a claim to know anything of Christ as He is in Himself. It is therefore inadmissible to teach the

<sup>1</sup> Johann Arnd's *Sechs Bücher vom wahren Christenthum*, Stuttgart, Steinkopf, Buch i. cap. 21. 6, 7.

<sup>2</sup> Feuerbach, *Wesen des Christenthums*, 2nd ed. p. 23 ff.; 3rd ed. p. 44.

pre-existence of Christ in the sense of His eternal deity. For *as such* Christ cannot be revealed to us. He is not otherwise open or manifest to us than as revealed; consequently not in an aspect which must be conceived as beyond all revelation, as outside all experience—in an aspect to which we can have no relation. “The notion of the pre-existence of Christ as such is neither a religious idea nor the complete expression of His deity—not the former, because in it He is not revealed to us; not the latter, because the doctrine is merely a buttress to the traditional theological conception of His deity.” These are Ritschl’s words in the *first* edition of his principal work, and in the same connection he refers expressly to the “false theory of cognition and bad metaphysics, which were part of the scientific form of the old theological systems.”<sup>1</sup> In the *second* edition, the argument, of which the above passage forms a part, is omitted;<sup>2</sup> but we are still told that “the deity of Christ must be understood as an attribute, which is manifested in and by His work, if it is to be understood at all;” and at the same time the method of cognition employed by his opponents is repudiated as unserviceable.<sup>3</sup>

Not in the metaphysical sense, not as the eternal background of His historical personality, but as the content of that personality, as an attribute of His temporal existence, must the deity of Christ be viewed. The predicate “deity” which we apply to Him is an expression of the special recognition which the Church gives to its founder, the peculiar estimate in which it holds Him. In the text of the Lutheran Catechism, we are assured, this same attribute is only a subordinate predicate of “the Jesus Christ who is designated *my Lord*. Such is the worth asserted for Him, ascribed to Him by religious faith in Him; this, therefore, is the true and proper confession of His deity.” But that “Christ is my Lord,”

<sup>1</sup> *Rechtfertigung und Veröhnung*, Bd. iii. p. 357.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* 2nd ed. Bd. iii. p. 382; compare with p. 356 ff. of 1st ed.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 369 f.

"cleaves to the entire compass of His human existence, work, suffering, to the effort which He devoted thereto, and which He expended in order that He might win us and bring us under His rule." "But if Christ is my Lord through that which He has done and suffered for my salvation, and if I honour Him as my God in the act of trusting the power of His grace for my salvation's sake, that is a value-judgment of a direct kind."<sup>1</sup> The predicate "deity" which we apply to Christ contains no metaphysical idea, designates not a form or mode of being, in which Christ cannot become manifest to us, but is simply an attribute of His historical human life—an expression of the value which that life has for our religious faith.

When, then, Ritschl notwithstanding teaches that Christ has pre-existence and eternal deity so far as, being "the head and Lord of the kingdom of God, He is an eternal object of the love of God;" and that He "consequently existed eternally for God even as He appeared to us under the limitations of time,"<sup>2</sup> it is clear that he ascribes to Christ merely an ideal pre-existence such as belongs to the Church also, inasmuch as the Church, too, was an object of the loving will of God.<sup>3</sup> Prior to His human birth, Christ was as far, therefore, from having real existence as was the Church before it was founded. Real premundane existence is thus ascribed, not to Christ, but merely to the divine will as directed to the establishment of the kingdom of God through Christ. As thus defined, however, the divine will is the volition of something that has yet to exist, something therefore which does not yet exist.

But if the attribute of deity belongs to Christ exclusively

<sup>1</sup> Ritschl, *Rechtfertigung*, etc., 2nd ed. Bd. iii. pp. 365 f., 369. [The German word here used is *Werthurtheil*. Moral and æsthetic judgments are *Werthurtheile*. When we say, "That man is righteous," we pronounce a moral *Werthurtheil*, as distinguished from a "scientific or theoretical" judgment, such as "salt is chloride of sodium," "the two angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles."—Tr.]

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid. passim*, p. 435 f.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 437.



on the ground of what He accomplished as a man, this is again not to be supposed to imply a *post-existent* deity; as though Christ after having accomplished His work on earth, in the act of being exalted to the right hand of God had also been made equal with God. "The formula in which Christ is said to have been exalted to the right hand of God" is without content for us, "because Christ as the exalted One is for us directly hidden;" "unless, indeed, regard be had to the fact that Christ is the continuous ground of the existence of the Church which He designed to establish by His discourses, His acts, His sufferings."<sup>1</sup> Here, too, Ritschl is guided by the epistemological principle, that we know the thing not as it is in itself, but as it is for us—relatively, as it is a phenomenon acting on us. Any doctrine of Christ's state of exaltation, therefore, which passes beyond the limits of our faculty of cognition as set by this rule, is *ipso facto* excluded, because based on a "false theory of knowledge." "If the deity of Christ, or His dominion over the world in the form of the Exalted One, is to be demonstrated as matter of necessary knowledge, as a factor in the Christian-religious view of the world, it must be shown to constitute an element in the action of Christ on us. But His historical life furnishes the true standard and test of His action on us; consequently the deity of Christ, or in other words, His dominion over the world, must be traceable in definite features of His historical life, and be understood as an attribute of His temporal existence. For what Christ is from the eternal point of view, and what His action on us is as exalted to God, would be utterly unknowable if it had not come into view in His temporal, historical existence—in other words, if He had not been similarly active on earth. Unless the notion of His present dominion can be filled with the definite marks or characteristics of His historical activity, it must remain either a worthless formula or schema, or become the occasion of all

<sup>1</sup> Ritschl, *Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, p. 400.

sorts of fanaticism. If, on the other hand, we are to retain the belief in Christ's present rule over the community of the kingdom of God, and in His action for the continuous incorporation of the world into this kingdom, which is the end of its existence, then dominion over the world must be recognisable as having been already a prominent feature of His historical life."<sup>1</sup> As far as His earthly life is concerned, no material is discoverable in it for making intelligible what is termed His royal function, the exercise of His royal office, "which cannot be subsumed partly under His prophetic, partly under His priestly activity." But if Christ founded the Church "by His royal prophethood and priesthood, in forming our estimate of the part He now takes as the Exalted One in the continuous maintenance of the Church, we must be entirely guided by the mode in which He discharged the same functions during His historical life—in other words, by our knowledge of what He did to the same end whilst He was on earth." "Christ's work *in statu exaltationis* must be conceived as an expression of the permanent influence of His historical appearance."<sup>2</sup> This is the manifest, revealed aspect of His exaltation.

According to this view, therefore, Christology has to teach that Christ was eternally willed by God; for the rest, it has no contents whatever besides His historical life and the continuous action thereof in the Church.

§ 50. *The question accordingly next to be answered is that as to the real nature of the work Christ accomplished by His life and sufferings.*

With all the greater expectancy do we now accordingly approach the question, What then is the distinctive content of the historical life of Christ or of His existence on earth? What did He accomplish by His life, works, and sufferings? What is the specific achievement which the Church has in

<sup>1</sup> Ritschl, *Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, p. 376 f.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 400 f.

view when, by way of expressing the value it sets thereon, it attributes deity to Christ the accomplisher?

Can it have been the *vicarious endurance* of the *penalty of sin* by His death on our behalf? Ritschl believes himself to have shown that "the idea of a penal satisfaction being the necessary condition of the operation of divine grace has no basis or justification in the Biblical idea of God;" "it arose elsewhere," he maintains, "by way of inference from the principle of the Hellenic religion that the gods exact double retribution: a principle which is further supplemented by the assumption that the original relation between God and man is most truly represented as legal—a relation of law and justice."<sup>1</sup> The doctrine of a substitutionary satisfaction for sin must for various reasons, from Ritschl's point of view, be regarded as unmeaning. The Church's doctrine of atonement rests on a metaphysical basis; it presupposes the existence of an eternal righteousness prior to any cosmic reality, and that that righteousness must assert itself unconditionally over against the world and be carried out in and on the world. The point of view of Empiricism, on the contrary, admits of no supramundane right, of no fundamental laws preceding the world, of no ante-cosmic truth and necessity.<sup>2</sup> If such be the case, the metaphysical presupposition referred to, which lies at the basis of the Church's doctrine of the atonement, falls, of course, to the ground. Ritschl, indeed, has not himself expressly adopted this point of view as his own. What he blames in the Church doctrine of the atonement is its application of the conception of public or state law to the relation between God and man, and its view of the penal righteousness of God in accordance with this conception.<sup>3</sup> Dorner, on the contrary, reminds him that even the righteousness of States has religious and moral roots, and without them would be

<sup>1</sup> Ritschl, *passim*, and p. 442, cf. § 32.

<sup>2</sup> See the second section of this treatise, chap. iii.

<sup>3</sup> Ritschl, *Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, Bd. iii. p. 230 f.

destitute of principle.<sup>1</sup> Hence it would follow that even public or State law has not its ultimate principle in itself, but is founded on essentially existent right. Nothing, however, can be more incompatible with Ritschl's empirical point of view than the idea of essential right or essential necessity—right and necessity that are such in and of themselves. According to him, the thing-in-itself is a memory-image; consequently that which is termed essential right or essential necessity can only be regarded as that which is abstracted from actuality, as that which has no actual existence—a mere abstraction. The Church doctrine of the atonement, therefore, so far as its governing principle is concerned, must be allowed to be wholly dependent on an empty abstraction.

But Ritschl further denies *original sin*. For original sin is the sin of the human race or genus; and as we have seen above, in his judgment the idea of race or genus is a mere abstraction, a universalized memory-image. Empiricism leads necessarily to nominalism.<sup>2</sup> With nominalism Ritschl agrees in denying the reality of the genus. But if the genus is destitute of objective reality, there can be no generic sin, and therefore no original or inherited sin (*Erbsünde*). So, too, if the thing, as he maintains, exists only in its phenomenal effects, there is no need for our thinking a sinful ground in the human heart below or behind the single sins, different from sinful conduct and from actual sinful volitions. "We must not posit a general conception of sin as an actuality behind individual sinful acts—it would be unintelligible. For a passively inherited state cannot be conceived as sin."<sup>3</sup> "Sin is not a unity constituted by one principle; but a collective unity resulting from all the individual acts and inclinations."<sup>4</sup> The subject of sin is "humanity as the sum-total

<sup>1</sup> Dorner, *System der christlichen Glaubenslehre*, Bd. ii. p. 225.

<sup>2</sup> See Note 42 in Appendix.

<sup>3</sup> Ritschl, *Theologie und Metaphysik*, p. 57.

<sup>4</sup> Ritschl, *Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, Bd. iii. p. 324. See also Note 43 in Appendix.

of all its individuals, so far as the conduct of any man—conduct which places him in relations of incalculably complex interaction with others—being selfish is directed to the opposite of good, and leads to combinations of individuals for common evil purposes.”<sup>1</sup> Actual sin does, of course, tend to become a habit, a propensity. But ignorance, too, is a “very important factor in the rise and development of sin.”<sup>2</sup> In so far as men are as sinners the objects of possible salvation and reconciliation by the love of God, either as individuals or as a whole, “in so far is sin treated by God as *ignorance*.”<sup>3</sup> There is no such thing as anger of God, or as a holy indignation of insulted love. The righteousness of God is substantially identical with His grace; antagonism between the two has therefore no existence, and needs no reconciliation. On the contrary, “the notion that righteousness and grace draw God, so to speak, in contrary directions,” is “irreligious to the extent that the unity of the divine will is the indefeasible condition of confidence in God.”<sup>4</sup>

The doctrine of the atonement, as taught by the Church, implies, on the contrary, a necessity which has an objective existence for God Himself, and which is not the outcome of His loving will.<sup>5</sup> In this respect we may agree with Schelling’s remark, that “it was not God, who must be a loving God to send His Son for us at all, but only some principle independent of divine love, *cui obnoxii eramus*, and which stood in the way of our *καταλλαγή*, that could have demanded the death of Christ;” even though we may not accept the theory of potences on which the further development of that remark is based.<sup>6</sup> The objection that God would thus be subjected to necessity, to a kind of fate, may be met by the consideration that this very principle is embraced in the

<sup>1</sup> *Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, vol. iii. p. 311.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 351.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 357.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* p. 438 f.

<sup>5</sup> See Note 44 in Appendix.

<sup>6</sup> *Philosophie der Offenbarung*, *Werke*, 2 Abth. 4 B. p. 199.

divine nature—that, in fact, it is a moment of the divine essence. *Quidquid est in Deo, est Deus*: we do not thus contradict the position laid down in these words of Thomas Aquinas—or at all events ascribed to him.<sup>1</sup> But Ritschl's system is entirely lacking in the elements that could either explain or warrant the assumption of such a different principle in God. From his point of view, therefore, the Church doctrine of the vicarious penal sufferings of Christ must appear as in every respect destitute of object.<sup>2</sup> Ritschl cannot therefore allow that His death had the nature of a substitutionary satisfaction. On the contrary, "His sufferings served no other purpose than that of *testing His faithfulness* in His vocation or mission;" God ordained the violent death He endured for this purpose. Christ Himself accepted His sufferings "as an accidental accompaniment of His positive faithfulness in the calling that had been appointed Him."<sup>3</sup>

§ 51. *The question now to be answered then is, What was Christ's special and proper vocation?*

What was the peculiar, the specific mission or calling of Christ? According to Ritschl, it was the founding of that universal moral community of men which is designated the kingdom of God;<sup>4</sup> or, in other words, the organization of humanity upon the principle of action from the motive of love. This organization is to be effected by means of the Church which Christ established. Consequently the real design of the entire vocational activity of Christ—the activity by means of which He revealed God—was the establishment of the Christian Church as the community out of which the

<sup>1</sup> *Summa Theologica*, Parisiis 1882, Quest. iii. art. 3, cf. Index sec. p. 505, No. 36.

<sup>2</sup> See Note 45 in Appendix.

<sup>3</sup> *Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, vol. iii. pp. 416, 444, 525.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* p. 416.



kingdom of God was to grow: this was the essential feature of Christ's mission.

But in what way, by what means, did Christ establish the Church? Christ, Ritschl tells us, had experience of a religious relation to God such as had never before been experienced; and of this He testified to His disciples, with the design of initiating them into the same religious view of the world and mode of judging themselves.<sup>1</sup> What now was this special relation in which He stood to God? "In the vocational activity that was peculiar to Christ the essential will of God as love was made manifest or revealed, in that the kingdom of God, which was Christ's final purpose, is identical with the final purpose of God."<sup>2</sup> It was "the original and special peculiarity of Christ to identify His own personal final aim with the final aim which God had proposed to Himself:" for this reason "He is the personal revelation of the essential will of God as Love." The superiority which characterizes Him above all others, as to His relation to God, is this: "the identity of the content of His personal will" (with the will of God).<sup>3</sup> Accordingly we must conceive of Christ as the man whose will has the same content as the will of the Father, the final aim of His personality being identical with the aim set before Himself by God. The distinguishing feature of His relation to God is therefore *to be conceived as agreement or harmony of will*, in other words, moral unity. How it was possible for such a man to come into existence is a question which Ritschl declines to answer. "So far as one desires to be a Christian, one must recognise as a fact—a given fact, a *datum*—this relation of Christ to God, declared by Himself and proved even unto death, as also by His resurrection from the dead. We must refrain entirely from attempts to get behind this *datum*—to explain how it came to pass in detail, how it acquired an empirical exist-

<sup>1</sup> *Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, vol. iii. p. 359.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 421.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 431, 436.

ence. Attempts of this kind are purposeless, because they are resultless; and being resultless, it is injurious to make them.<sup>1</sup>

But inasmuch as Christ, owing to the moral unity of His will with the divine will, is dependent on God, He is at the same time free and "independent relatively to all that is called world." For, "expressed in terms of Christianity, freedom is constant self-determination under the influence of and in harmony with the final purpose of the kingdom of God;" it stands, therefore, in a relation of inward correspondence with dependence on God. Action that is directed to the kingdom of God shows itself to be free, "so far as it is accompanied by the consciousness that all the relations between our natural environment and the determinate constitution of our own personal nature have derived their whole value from their function as the appointed means of promoting the well-being of the agent."<sup>2</sup> The whole world does not compare in value with personal life; and by securing spiritual dominion over the world, man asserts for his life the value which answers to its destination. "This religious destination of the members of the Church of Christ is prefigured and realized in the person of its founder as the ever quickening power by which others are carried forward to the same destination; for when Christ made the union of men in the kingdom of God—which is the very end and aim of God Himself—the task of His own personal life, He realized that independence of the world which the members of His Church are intended after Him also to realize."<sup>3</sup> Here we may gather what is meant by the power and dominion over the world which appertains to Christ. If this attribute, "as may surely be taken for granted, is connected with the religious destination of man first realized by Christ Himself, it may

<sup>1</sup> *Theologie und Metaphysik*, p. 29. See Note 46 in Appendix.

<sup>2</sup> *Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, vol. iii. p. 273.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 360.

fairly be expected to become the prerogative of others also, provided, of course, that as members of His Church they enter into the relation to God which He designed to establish, which He mediated, and which is in accordance with the general view of the world laid down by Him."<sup>1</sup> "Independence of the religious self-consciousness over against the world, is identical with that power over the world" which is intended to be realized through the Christian religion. "In this positive freedom" of the Christian there is no question of "effects which alter the mechanical conditions of the world, or materially modify the laws of the social order, but of a different estimate or value to be set on the various phases of the natural and historical life. For when the supernatural, final end and aim of God becomes the controlling motive of the Christian life, all the other impulses and motives, which in the guise of disagreeable influences affect human life in its contact with nature and in the ordinary relations of society, are either deprived of their power, or are subordinated to that supreme motive and impulse."<sup>2</sup> "The power over the world, which Paul claims for the Christian, and which should serve as a guiding analogy to the true meaning of Christ's original assertion, belongs altogether to the domain of the spiritual life, and cannot assume a tangible or perceptible shape—a shape perceptible to sense."<sup>3</sup> "Christ's original assertion," here referred to, is His declaration that *all things are delivered unto me of my Father* (Matt. ii. 27): "words which characterize His power over the world, not as inherited omnipotence, but as something the possession of which Jesus claims for Himself in consequence of a divine gift."<sup>4</sup> His power over the world, therefore, is spiritual, inward; it is an estimate and a judgment of Himself, through which He recognises and appreciates that personal worth of His which lifts Him above the whole world. And in what way did Christ prove that

<sup>1</sup> *Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, vol. iii. p. 423 f.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 426 f.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 423 f.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* p. 421.

He possessed this power over the world? The answer runs, Christ raised Himself above the particularistic and mundane limits which conditioned His existence as having been born an Israelite, not only by embracing the whole of human life and its interests within the scope of His activity, but also by the independence of every specifically Old Testament standard which characterized His religious estimate of Himself. This proof or test of His power is all the more striking as the apostle of the Gentiles had not attained such a measure of inner freedom from Jewish prejudice. He continued so bound by piety towards the distinctive privileges conferred on his nation by the Old Testament, as to insist, notwithstanding all reasons to the contrary, on the hope of its final conversion to Christ.<sup>1</sup> Christ, on the contrary, was "inwardly hampered by none of the limitations of mundane prejudices, whether rooted in the spirit of the family or in that of the people to which He belonged."<sup>2</sup>

But the "real, final test" of His power over the world is His *patience in suffering*. By patiently accepting all the sufferings that befell Him as tests appointed to try His faithfulness in the mission entrusted to Him, He vanquished the seductive opposition of the world, and acquiesced in the world's obstructions as providential arrangements of God. It is His aim also to lead those whom He calls to Himself to regard the restraints on their liberty, the burdens which they have to bear, in the same light: "on this condition they will become easy to bear; because patience, which grows out of the religious impulse, lifts men above the evils of the world." "Such is the test of power over the world presented by Jesus Himself—of that power which appertains to Him from or in virtue of His reciprocal knowledge with God."<sup>3</sup>

Christ thus stands in unity of will with God, and is for

<sup>1</sup> See Rom. xi. 25.

<sup>2</sup> *Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, vol. iii. p. 425 f.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 429: "Die ihm aus seiner wechselseitigen Erkenntniss mit Gott zusteht."

that reason qualified to wield a power and dominion over the world, that shows itself chiefly in the patient endurance of suffering. So far as the will of God as love is manifested in Him, He is in the former respect the archetype of love; in the latter respect He is the archetype of spiritual domination over the world. He is the "archetype of that life of love and exaltation over motives arising from the world, which is the end and goal of the kingdom of God."<sup>1</sup> By initiating His adherents into the like relation to God and the world, He established the community of the kingdom of God; and thus His Church expresses the twofold significance attaching to Him as the perfect revelation of God, and as the archetype of spiritual domination over the world, by conferring upon Him the predicate deity.

§ 52. *The Christology thus taught by Ritschl is not only not consistent with itself, but is of the most meagre character.*

Such are the fundamental positive ideas of Ritschl's Christology. In the first place, it seems more than doubtful whether it is consistent with itself. At any rate, it is decidedly out of harmony with the cry uttered by Christ on the cross, *My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?* Unless we put a forced interpretation on these words, they certainly express some change in His relation to God—they point to a form of suffering brought upon Him, not by the world, but by God Himself. As Luther remarks: "Here God was against Him; the words bear no other gloss nor explanation."<sup>2</sup> "Non solum ait," observes Bengel, "se a Deo traditum voluntati hominum, sed etiam a Deo ipso quiddam esse passum nobis ineffabile."<sup>3</sup> This word of the Crucified One is necessarily a stone of stumbling in the way of every

<sup>1</sup> *Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, vol. iii. p. 435.

<sup>2</sup> Luther's *Sämmtliche Werke*, herausgegeben von Walch, Theil xii. p. 1976.

<sup>3</sup> *Gnomon* on Matt. xxvii. 46.

sort of rationalistic Christology. Ritschl has indeed his own mode of surmounting the difficulty. He says Christ supposed Himself to have been deserted by God, though the supposition was, of course, objectively unfounded. But Christ's words show, themselves, in this very way to be a stone of stumbling to Ritschl himself; the very view which he takes of them converts them into a *σκάνδαλον* that overthrows his entire Christology. Not only does Christ thus become an erring man, and, so far as the predicate deity is applicable to Him, an erring God; but if he cherished unfounded distrust of God, how can it be possible still to maintain that His will was in abiding, perfect agreement and identity with the will of God? Surely, too, distrust towards God can scarcely be regarded as a proof of trustful "world-dominating" patience in suffering! The two moments which, according to Ritschl, constituted Christ's specific work and significance, namely, the unity of His will with God and His world-vanquishing patience, have thus vanished before our eyes. All that he has worked out on these two lines with so much expenditure of pains and skill is emptied of its significance by this one observation.

But leaving this on one side, and examining his positive christological positions in themselves, what do we find? Our attention is arrested at the very outset by the *meagre* and *poverty-stricken* character of the picture which he has drawn of Christ. This is all the more remarkable, as he seems himself to imagine that he is thus restoring the true Christ, in all His living actuality, to a generation that is turning away in disgust from the faith of the Church. The two thoughts—the identity of Christ's will with that of God, and His spiritual mastery over the world—recur and recur again with wearisome monotony; and what a wealth of scriptural fact and thought, as well as of Church doctrine, is forced within the narrow limits traced by means of these ideas! The unity of Christ's will with God consists in this, that He adopted God's great



personal end, namely, the establishment of the kingdom of God, as the final purpose of His own life; in other words, that He made it the task of His life to lay the foundation of a union of humanity, of which love should be the ruling motive.

Is there now any essential difference between this and what was taught by Rationalism, namely, that Christ made it the business of His life, in accordance with the divine will, by means of teaching and example, to lead men to love one another, and thus to do the will of God? No material difference is made by the introduction of the idea of the kingdom of God; for, according to Ritschl, that kingdom is itself nothing more than the union of men by love; in other words, what Kant designated the union of humanity by the laws of virtue. Nor does the supremacy over the world attributed by him to Christ signify aught beyond freedom from Jewish prejudices, and patient endurance of suffering, in reliance on the fatherly providence of God. Now, this idea of the unity of Christ's will with God, and of what Ritschl embraces under the rubric of dominion over the world, is the essential feature of his Christology. As contrasted therewith, the predicate of deity, which he considers ought to be attributed to Christ, strikes one as something that does not really belong to His nature,—as a sort of external appendage,—inasmuch as the value of what Christ has accomplished for us lies simply and solely in the thing done, and does not at all depend on the fact that He who did it was God; on the contrary, the predicate deity with which the Church honours Christ is simply an expression of the high estimate it forms of the value of the work already accomplished by Him. Deity, therefore, is an attribute which does not in itself and originally belong to Christ; it is a crown of honour which the believing Church has set upon His brow in gratitude for the work which He successfully achieved. Nay more, this predicate of deity must necessarily be regarded as an unjustifiable addition and hyper-

bole, because no sufficient reason is assigned for it in that for the sake of which the predicate is applied. The fact of the will of Christ being determined by the will of God does not at all imply that Christ is God or equal with God ; what it rather involves is His dependence on God. Equally impossible is it to justify the predicate by reference to the dominion over the world said to be wielded by Christ. For the patience in suffering which "constituted the proper test of the peculiar power He had over the world,"<sup>1</sup> rested on His confidence in God. But the confidence in God which enabled Christ to bear suffering patiently was the very sign and token of the distance between Him and God.

We know, moreover, that Ritschl denies real pre-existence to Christ. According to his system, Christ had no real existence prior to His human birth. He is not, therefore, the eternally existent one, but one who has come into existence in time. A God who has come into existence is a self-contradiction ; it is, in fact, a piece of heathen mythology which he has introduced into Christian theology. For how otherwise could the apotheosis of a man, on the part of the believing Church, be regarded than as an act of pagan deification ? Ritschl professes to aim at the extirpation of what he describes as heathen metaphysics from Christian theology, and on this pretence removes a number of elements apart from which the Christian religion is not what it professes to be—what it has been believed to be. Whilst engaged in this struggle against so-called heathen metaphysics, he admits into his own theology an element which exhibits a manifest relapse into heathen notions of the divine.

We, for our part, are unable to discover anything in his Christology that raises it above the level of simple Rationalism. And the appending of the title of deity to the picture of Christ which he has drawn, is a pagan procedure for which no justification whatever is offered.

<sup>1</sup> *Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, vol. iii. p. 427.

§ 53. *Ritschl's apparent advance beyond Rationalism by the introduction of the idea of the continuous action of the person of Christ in His Church.*

In one respect, indeed, he may seem to advance beyond Rationalism,—he teaches that the religious character and conduct of the members of Christ's Church were not only prefigured and exemplified in Him its founder, but also that His person is "the ever-active power enabling us to follow His example and tread in His footsteps," and that "owing to the stimulus and guidance which proceed from His person, and thence alone, we are able to take up the same position towards God and the world which He took up."<sup>1</sup> But if, as he himself elsewhere assures us, any kind of immediate relation to Christ must be considered as mere fancy and delusion;<sup>2</sup> and if, when we speak of Christ's working in His state of exaltation, it is only "another way of expressing the fact that His historical life exercises a permanent, an abiding influence,"<sup>3</sup> how can a stimulating and directive force be exerted on us by the person of Christ in any other sense than that in which it is in its measure true of other persons of extraordinary powers—the sense, for example, in which the spirit of Cæsar lived on in the Roman Empire; or in which the personality of Luther continues to give stimulus and guidance to the Lutheran Church? Such continuous onworking does not involve anything of the nature of a real presence; it is simply the influence in memory of one who belongs to the past. Ritschl has, in fact, left no doubt about the sense in which he himself intends the idea of Christ's continuous action in His Church to be taken. "Exact and detailed remembrance," says he, "is the form in which the human mind assimilates the effective and valuable motives,

<sup>1</sup> *Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, vol. iii. p. 360.

<sup>2</sup> *Theologie und Metaphysik*, p. 47 f.

<sup>3</sup> *Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, vol. iii. p. 401.

obedience to which gives to our life its specific colour and content." "It is by means of exact remembrance that the reciprocal personal relations of life in particular are mediated and established. One man works on in another, and is therefore to that extent present with him, when the conduct of the latter is determined by the education or stimulus which he owes to the former. This holds true in the most comprehensive sense of the religious connection established between our life and God through the exact remembrance of Christ and what He was and did."<sup>1</sup> "The continued maintenance of its own specific character by the Christian Church has depended on the *remembrance* of the completed life-work of Christ being kept constantly alive in its midst; and on the personal impulse given by its founder continuing to work on without break in the kindred efforts of its members."<sup>2</sup> When, therefore, Ritschl represents the members of the Church as receiving from the person of Christ a power that stimulates and guides, he means nothing more than was meant by Rationalism. Sincere as may be his endeavours to rise above the rationalistic spirit and circle of thought, and frequently as he assures us that his system differs *toto cœlo* therefrom, it is nevertheless true, as Steinmeyer has remarked, that, after every attempt to soar higher, Ritschl falls back to the level of Rationalism.<sup>3</sup>

But if Christ's present work in His Church is simply and solely a working in and through memory of one who is past and gone, it is a palpable contradiction in Ritschl, notwithstanding, to affirm that "it is the duty of Christians to trust and worship Christ under the predicate of deity, as they trust and worship God the Father."<sup>4</sup> One is forced in amazement to ask how it is that a man of such acuteness, and with such

<sup>1</sup> *Theologie und Metaphysik*, p. 47.

<sup>2</sup> *Unterricht in der christlichen Religion*, 2nd ed. § 25.

<sup>3</sup> F. L. Steinmeyer, *Die Geschichte der heiligen Passion des Herrn*, 2nd ed. p. 240.

<sup>4</sup> *Unterricht in der christlichen Religion*, 2nd ed. § 24.

a knowledge of the objections that can be advanced, should seem to be unaware of this contradiction.

§ 54. *Not only is Ritschl's view of Christ rationalistic—even such as it is, it lacks objective certitude.*

But even the rationalistic image of Christ thus left us lacks objective security.

The reconstruction of Christology undertaken by Ritschl was controlled and determined by an epistemological canon—the canon, namely, that we know things exclusively as they are for us in their phenomena, not as they are in themselves. Now, Christ is manifest to us neither as pre-existent nor as exalted to the right hand of God, but solely as He appeared in His earthly life; and His action on men in the state of exaltation is nothing more than a continuance of the action of His historical appearance—of His phenomenal existence and life on earth.<sup>1</sup> But what, according to Ritschl, is phenomenon? We have shown above, that, on his view of the matter, phenomenon is that which is generated through sensation, and that this involves the denial to it of objective reality. He himself appeals to this theory of cognition in support of his Christology, at the same time repudiating as erroneous the theory upheld by his opponents. It is therefore only fair to measure his christological positions by the standard of his own theory of cognition. But he himself has carried out this favourite theory only imperfectly. What we have to do, therefore, is to apply it consistently, and to draw its full logical consequences.

If our knowledge is altogether restricted to the phenomenal, then Christ, so far as He is an object of human knowledge, is merely phenomenon. What He may be in Himself appears to remain behind, at all events in the first instance, as an inscrutable mystery—a something unutterable, lying

<sup>1</sup> *Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, vol. iii. p. 401.

out beyond all christological affirmations, although, without doubt, still a reality. So it *appears*. But as, according to Ritschl, no objective reality attaches to things-in-themselves,<sup>1</sup> another conclusion is necessarily forced on us.

We are not permitted to take for granted the existence of another, truer, more real Christ prior to or behind the phenomenal Christ. Christ is absolutely nothing but phenomenon; nay more, He is phenomenon, too, in the sense already indicated—not objective, but subjective phenomenon—something that exists exclusively in the subject, a mere representation. All that the Christian Church therefore believes and confesses about Christ—all that is laid down in systems of Christian doctrine relating to Him, including what Ritschl himself teaches, has for its sole object religious representations or ideas within the believing soul. There is nothing in it all but religious feelings or sensations of the Church. What the New Testament tells us about Christ and His work, either in the form of narrative or doctrine, has no value beyond that of objectification, reflex or precipitate, of the religious consciousness of the Church. Christ is, in a word, a *representation of the mind of the Church*, and, beyond the Church's states of religious feeling, has no other place of existence whatever. How this Christ-idea came into existence; how it arose in the mind of the Church, or rather, how the Church and it arose together,—this is not a fit subject for scientific investigation. The only proper way of treating it, is that with which we made acquaintance when considering the empiricism of Lotze. As that empiricism refuses to stir a step beyond the given phenomena of the world, so Ritschl's Christology refuses to stir a step beyond the given Christ-phenomenon. For our knowledge Jesus Christ is given in a "fellowship with God, such that His life-work is the work of God. So far as we mean to be Christians, we have to recognise this datum—this relation to God, to which Christ

<sup>1</sup> Compare chap. ii. of this section.



gave expression, and which He maintained even unto death, and proved by His resurrection. We must refrain altogether from attempts to get behind this datum, to show how as to its individual elements it came to pass—to account empirically for its existence.”<sup>1</sup> Christ and His work must accordingly be accepted as given facts. But if these facts are mere phenomena, they exist solely for the religious consciousness—they are simply determinations of the believer’s mind; nor does the circumstance of their being shared by large numbers at all endow them with objective truth. Whether the image of Christ, which thus reflects the faith of the Church, is more or less complete and full, or whether it is more or less richly adorned, can make no great difference; for it simply signifies a greater or less vigour of the religious imagination.

All this is, of course, fatal to a Christology that claims to embody objective truth—it becomes an impossibility. Not even the reduced or modified image of Christ set up by Ritschl can hold its ground. According to the principles of his theory of cognition, the few positive christological elements which he himself endeavours to retain are deprived of their objective truth, and must be treated as expressions of states of religious feeling. The object of Christology, in a word, is resolved into a representation generated in the believing mind by its own religious life.

#### § 55. *Consequences for other doctrinal positions of Ritschl.*

What these consequences are it is almost unnecessary further to describe—they are obvious. This is especially true with regard to his doctrine of *Justification* and the *Atonement*. In the judgment of Dorner, the true kernel of Ritschl’s great work, which professes to be an exhibition of the Christian doctrine of justification and atonement, is the

<sup>1</sup> *Theologie und Metaphysik*, p. 29.

position that neither expiation nor satisfaction is needed, because there is no such thing in God as punitive justice, even as there is in human experience no such thing as punishment, unless it be in connection with human states. He maintains also that Ritschl's system altogether lacks a clear and self-consistent doctrine with regard to punishment, to divine retributive justice, to moral freedom, and to guilt.<sup>1</sup> After having shown, as we previously did, why Ritschl is compelled in consistency to repudiate the doctrine of the atonement in the sense of an objective satisfaction, it is unnecessary for us to dwell longer on these points. Nor need we devote further attention to the new turn which he has given to the conception of atonement. One consequence, however, we must notice, which naturally suggests itself at the particular point of our inquiry which we have now reached. If Christ is merely a phenomenon of consciousness, justification and atonement, so far as they are grounded in the work and sufferings of Christ, are transactions the factors of which are to be found exclusively within the domain of the individual soul; in other words, they are solely *internal relations of the soul to itself*.

Notwithstanding all the stress which Ritschl's theological system seems to lay on the *Church*, it amounts to nothing more than a sum-total of individuals, who are bound together by a homogeneous religious imagination. For the faith of Christians is faith in Christ. But this Christian faith, so far as it regards as an objective reality something that has no existence outside the representing religious mind, is mere imagination. If, further, the individual alone really *is*, and the unity is a mere representation which we ourselves confer on a given manifold, the idea of the Church as a unity, as a whole, had no objective truth. So far as objective reality is ascribed to this representation, it is of course a mere imagination. But it is our business to free ourselves from imagina-

<sup>1</sup> Dorner, *System der christlichen Glaubenslehre*, vol. ii. pp. 597, 599.

tions. The Christian consciousness, therefore, would seem to involve an individualism and atomism the necessary function of which is to bring about the disintegration of the great ecclesiastical bodies, in order that in this way Christianity may attain adequate form and realization. Ritschl assures us, indeed, that the individual ought to lean on the Church, and that by leaning on the Church he secures his own Christianity; but if the Church as a whole has no objective reality, how can it be a support to the faith and confidence of the individual? If individuals alone possess objective reality, Church and kingdom of God are as complete a fiction as people and state.

According to Ritschl, further, the chief point of the atonement is faith in providence. "Faith in the fatherly providence of God is, in general, the content of the religious perfection which grows out of reconciliation with God through Christ."<sup>1</sup> But this position is opposed to experience. Faith in a divine overruling Providence is frequently cherished where there is no consciousness of a reconciliation having taken place; nay, where there is even no recognition of the necessity of reconciliation. Belief in providence is rather one of the general and elementary phases of the religious life,—it by no means necessarily presupposes a specifically Christian piety. To represent it as the fruit of the atonement, only proves how seriously the redemption wrought by Christ had been previously shorn of its significance and value.

But let us see what Ritschl makes of the divine providence to which he assigns this position. "In general, it is that faith in the providence of God by means of which, or in the power of which, religious dominion is wielded over the world." But "the dominion over the world which Christianity leads men to exercise is not to be understood in the empirical, ordinary sense." It is to be "taken ideally, not technically and empirically;"<sup>2</sup> in other words, we are to understand by

<sup>1</sup> *Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, vol. iii. p. 606.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 570, 573.

it an alteration in our estimate of ourselves relatively to the world. The doctrine of divine providence, therefore, does not at all imply that God really intervenes in the course of nature at individual junctures for the benefit of believers, but is likewise a specific manner of self-judgment. The Christian view of the world, with the corresponding self-estimate, "constitute the sphere within which are developed all such devout views as that because we are children of God we are the objects of His special concern and help; and that for this reason all the things and events of the world must work for our good." The doctrine of divine providence is not a branch of theoretical knowledge; for this reason it cannot be tested either by the experiences of other men, or by observation of the relation which they take up towards the world: it is simply and exclusively a matter of individual experience.<sup>1</sup>

Yet Ritschl's design is to assert for providence some sort of objective reality;—what is its nature?

Belief in divine providence must not be supposed to imply that, objectively considered, the ordinary course of events is modified by special divine arrangements in favour of believers;—no! all that it signifies is, that by virtue of the Christian view of the world in general, and of the corresponding judgment which the believer forms regarding himself, he can feel assured that, as a matter of fact, all things are ordered for the best. It must not for a moment be imagined that anything which impends according to the regular course of nature will be turned aside by special divine interference. Not even prayer can have the effect of bringing to pass or preventing the occurrence of anything which would not have happened, or failed to happen, without prayer. Ritschl is therefore perfectly consistent in teaching that prayer is chiefly *thanksgiving*. Very naturally so. For not in any sense to affect the course of nature—not to cause or prevent anything—is prayer offered; it stands in relation to a fixed order of things

<sup>1</sup> *Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, vol. iii. p. 573 f.

which could not be broken if we wished it; and which, having been settled beforehand for our welfare, need not be broken even were it possible. All that we can do is to give thanks for the order as it actually exists; we are not to desire to change it. For prayer—that is, *petition*—there is therefore no place at all in Ritschl's system; and he accordingly warns us against the notion of “influencing the divine arrangements by our prayers and counsels.”<sup>1</sup> Schleiermacher assigns to petitions the function of combining our desire for good success with our consciousness of God, and so far leaves it a place; but in Ritschl's view even that is going too far, and he charges him with thus contradicting the true Biblical conception of *προσευχή*. “It is undeniable,” says he, “that the prime feature in that conception is a recognition of God in a spirit of thankfulness and submissiveness that counteracts the intensity of desire.” Petition he regards as something which is specially characteristic of pietistic circles, which betray their sense of its special importance “by the lively interest they take in answers to prayer, of which they always have numerous proofs ready to hand.” “The comprehensive promises relative to the hearing of prayer, given by Jesus in Matt. vii. 7–11, to which appeal is made, ought, in Ritschl's view, scarcely to be taken as a definite instruction to the Church, but merely as a kind of preliminary encouragement to religious confidence in God, addressed to a larger circle of hearers.” “Prayer, according to the intent of Christianity, is rather, on the one hand, a special manifestation of faith in God's fatherly providence, which grows out of the atonement; on the other hand, a special phase of the resolve to be humble.” “A *petition* is simply a modified form of *thanksgiving*.” Even the petition for daily bread in the Lord's Prayer “is not so much a request as a *thanksgiving*:—this, at all events, is the case if it be granted, on the one hand, that God is ready to provide us with all the necessities of life before we ask for them (Matt.

<sup>1</sup> *Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, vol. iii. p. 581.

vi. 8); and, on the other, that we earn those necessities by our own labour." Every petition should be controlled by thanksgiving, and be restricted according to circumstances. "On this condition prayer is a manifestation of humility and patience, and a means of establishing ourselves in these virtues." When the apostle exhorts us to pray without ceasing, what he intends is, that we should transform prayer into "a mood of humility and patience that has no need to express itself in words"—a mood which would be identical with prayer.<sup>1</sup>

It scarcely needs remarking that *petitionary prayer* is thus completely set aside. A manifestation of humility and patience, that is, a setting forth of something that already exists, is not a prayer for something that has yet to come into being. The prayers of Christians are therefore exclusively thanksgivings, that is, if they are to be self-consistent. The subject of thankfulness, however, is the fact that things are so ordered that the hindrances of the natural life, and the evils which befall it, necessarily promote the welfare of our souls: a position of matters which is rooted in the fact that God is love; or, otherwise expressed, in the fact of His having constituted the true end of the world, namely, the establishment of the kingdom of God—His own self-end. It is our duty, therefore, to see in the existing order of things the result and sway of divine providence.

If all this is true, providence stands bound and powerless in presence of the actual course of the world, inasmuch as it can in nowise intervene for its modification. This order is posited with the very essence of providence itself: it follows necessarily from that essence. The divine love, therefore, can neither will nor cause anything that does not actually exist or come to pass. Providence therefore extends no whit further than the order of things as it actually exists. It is not a power or a purpose of love which reaches out beyond

<sup>1</sup> *Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, vol. iii. p. 597 ff.



the actual course of nature; on the contrary, its design is identical therewith. But if providence neither reaches out beyond the actual course of things nor can intervene therein, it has *no other content than that very course itself*; so that when a man trusts in providence, he has no more guarantee for his personal security than when he trusts to the actually existent order of things.

What specific advantage, then, does this belief in providence offer? What purpose is served by speaking of divine providence as though it were the cause of the existing order of things? All that we thus effect is, as it were, to duplicate the actual content of this said order, by pushing it back into something which we are to represent to ourselves as its transcendent cause. For if we ask, What is the nature and content of this cause? the only answer we receive is, The cause is that by which the existing order is produced. Its value therefore must be for us, not at all in itself, but exclusively in its effect—the very effect which we see before us. That which is termed efficient cause contributes nothing whatever to heighten the value of the effect for me: that effect continues just what it was, altogether apart from the so-called cause. What, then, do I personally gain by speaking as though my safety were ensured by something besides and beyond this order of things on which, as a matter of fact, it actually depends; especially as I am obliged to confess that of this something all I know is, that it is the cause of the existing order of things? Such a distinction may possibly claim a theoretical interest; it can scarcely possess a practical value.

Examined more closely, however, we find that not even from the theoretical point of view is it of interest. Why should not the intellect rest satisfied with the order of the world as actually given? Why should thought pass beyond it, and go forth in quest of a transmundane cause? What need is there for our endeavouring to get behind that which is

actually given, that which has come into existence, especially as this is just what Ritschl's empiricism in other cases expressly and on principle prohibits our doing? Enough for us that the order of things is what it is. His own injunction would lead us to content ourselves with that which is actually given. There is surely evidence enough that mind is superior to nature, and nature a means in the hand of mind, without resorting to this *Deus ex machina*, the supposition of a trans-mundane mind. Even pantheism can allow that the world is determined in view of a supra-ordination of mind over nature. "What do we mean when we speak of the destinies of humanity, of peoples, and of individuals being under the direction of providence," asks Strauss, "but that in virtue of the general mastery of mind over nature, the development of the human race, taken at large, proceeds in harmony with its true conception; that the contingency which characterizes the individual actions of men and the individual events of nature is worked up into the general necessity; and that the individual man can never find himself in a position over which his spirit cannot secure the control, and which he will not be able to reduce to a form and clothe with a character worthy of him?"<sup>1</sup> Faith in the fatherly providence of God resolves itself, on this view of the matter, into an assured confidence that reason is immanent in the actually existent order of things, and that accordingly nature is a means subordinate to spirit.

#### § 56. *The meaning of nature according to Ritschl.*

How is nature to be defined in harmony with Ritschl's theory of cognition? The things we perceive are exclusively subjective phenomena; things-in-themselves are mere abstractions. Hence it follows that nature is a sum-total of representations, and the entire objective world nothing but a

<sup>1</sup> D. F. Strauss, *Christliche Glaubenslehre*, vol. ii. p. 384.

represented world. The hindrances which we encounter in the world are, no doubt, means in the hands of mind, but only in this sense—that they form as it were the banks between which the stream of our representations takes its course. What seems at first sight to be a hindrance put in our way from without is seen to be on examination simply a part of the content of our own consciousness—something which we ourselves posit.

On this view of the matter, confidence in God becomes self-confidence; and we thus reach that apotheosis of man to which J. G. Fichte, that perfecter of the critical philosophy, actually advanced.

But this apotheosis, again, is a parody of itself; for the very premises from which it is deduced throw doubt on the reality of the very Ego whose apotheosis is celebrated, as we shall see farther on.

What, then, is left as the objective content of our Christian conviction?

Ritschl refers us to *revelation*. Revelation, he warns us, sets a limit to our religious knowledge; we are not to imagine that we can know either God or Christ outside of or beyond what is revealed;—this on the one hand. On the other hand, the certainty of our Christian knowledge is guaranteed, he assures us, and finds firm support in revelation, conjoined with the experience of the Church. As far as the latter is concerned, namely, the experience of the Church, this can no longer be affirmed, if, as would appear, that which constitutes the very centre and kernel of all its Christian experience is to be counted mere imagination. According to Ritschl's own premises, revelation is an *impossibility*, inasmuch as no revelation could ever reach us.

In point of fact, we know nothing but phenomena, that is, according to his theory of cognition; and these are the product of sensations which are excited in us.<sup>1</sup> But if our cognitive

<sup>1</sup> See chap. ii. of this section.

faculties are so constituted that we can know only phenomena, and not things as they are in themselves, revelation must necessarily be affected thereby, so far as it is matter of human perception and knowledge. It can only enter our minds by submitting to the conditions imposed by our intellectual powers. It is impossible, therefore, for us to know what is revealed, as it appears to Him from whom the revelation proceeds. No truth can be communicated to us claiming objective reality—reality independent of our apprehension of it; but solely in the form which it assumes after submitting to the immanent conditions imposed by our intellect. That, however, is a content which is nowhere to be found save in our consciousness. When we speak of something having become matter of knowledge to us through the medium of revelation, what we refer to is not something that existed prior to our knowing it in objective reality and independently of our mind, but merely a product of our own intellect, although we trace it back to an impulse received from without. As to what may be the objective, real, essential nature of that to which we attribute the genesis in our minds of what we call revealed knowledge, that can only be determined by abstracting from this so-called revealed knowledge all that our intellect contributes from itself in the act of receiving a revelation. To do this, however, is impossible. The matter of revelation which existed in itself prior to being presented to the human mind could only be isolated and recognised as such by being subjected in like manner to the forms and conditions of human cognition; but as the human mind is unable to escape from the conditions of its own action, such isolation is clearly impracticable. It must needs, therefore, continue for ever deaf and blind to revelation as such. Revelation is for it that which cannot be revealed.

Nor was the case different even as regards Christ Himself, so far as His mind was truly human. It is inconceivable, therefore, that He should have received revelations from God;

still less conceivable how He could have communicated them to others.

So far as we have hitherto gone, the reality of an objective factor in what is called revelation or revealed knowledge has not been denied—nay, has been posited; though it is no more than an absolutely unspeakable, unknown thing-in-itself—something which the religious soul obscurely divines and feels, the reality of which we are compelled to assume, if what we call revealed knowledge is to be ascribed to the action upon us of a cause outside ourselves, but which is inaccessible to cognition.

But the theory of cognition laid down by Ritschl will not allow us to hold fast the reality of even this unknown  $x$  of revelation; for, as we have seen, that theory involves the denial of real existence to the thing-in-itself. Revelation, therefore, is simply and solely a manifestation of the religious soul to itself; nothing is thereby revealed to the human mind but itself.<sup>1</sup>

But even here we are already conceding too much; for how can the human mind be revealed to itself? In affirming anything of the kind, we are implying a reality whose existence must be pronounced more than problematical. We are assured, however, that the real existence of our mind becomes certain to us in the will. But volition, no less than cognition and feeling, is merely a mode of action or function of the mind or soul presenting itself as a phenomenon. That of which volition, cognition, feeling are functions, would be the soul as it is in itself. But things-in-themselves are unknowable. What the soul is in itself, therefore, must remain unknown.

But we cannot stop here. In combating the doctrine of the *unio mystica*, Ritschl urges the objection that we are not at liberty to assume that the soul has a different, a more proper or real mode of being behind volition and cognition; on the contrary, says he, the soul is present in the functions which are

<sup>1</sup> See Note 47 in Appendix.

its phenomena.<sup>1</sup> In saying that the soul is present in its functions, we do not imply that the soul itself is a mere function, as Materialism maintains. Rather do we distinguish in that way between the soul and its functions or activities; for otherwise we should land ourselves in the impossible idea of activity or movement, without a something which is moved or active, and the activities of the soul could not be conceived as its activities.<sup>2</sup> But that of which volition and cognition are to be conceived as functions is the soul as it is in itself. Now, according to Ritschl, the thing-in-itself is a mere abstraction, an indistinct memory-image. Where, then, is the essentially real soul which was supposed to underlie our volition and cognition, of which volition and cognition are the manifestations or activities? There is no such thing as the *soul in itself*, if all things-in-themselves are to be treated as mere abstractions. Volitions and cognitions fall within the unity of consciousness; when, accordingly, we refer our acts of volition and cognition to that unity, the notion of the ego or soul as the subject of our volitions and cognitions necessarily arises within our mind. But this notion or representation is merely an accompaniment of the rest of our representations; seeing that things-in-themselves have no real existence, we have no right to ascribe to it objective reality.

We reach exactly the same conclusion from another point of view. Volition, knowledge, feeling, are *qualities* of the soul; the soul is related to these its marks as thing-in-itself is to its qualities. The qualities are given—they are the *data*; the thing is the unity which is imposed by our cognitive faculty on a number of given qualities; it is therefore merely a represented, not an objectively real unity. Consequently the soul considered as the unity of its qualities is a mere representation. The qualities are there: these qualities we represent to ourselves as a unity; and this representation

<sup>1</sup> *Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, vol. iii. p. 20 ff.; *Theologie und Metaphysik*, p. 37.

<sup>2</sup> See chap. i. of second section.



is the soul. Not a real substance therefore is the soul, but merely a product of the synthetic impulse of consciousness.

We thus reach the conclusion that there is no religious subject of which religion can be predicated. Not only that which professes to be the faith of the religious subject, but even the religious subject itself is mere representation, and wholly lacks reality. At an earlier stage of our inquiry, the object of religion, namely God, resolved Himself, when examined, into a mere representation; the same fate now befalls the human subject of religion. From whichever side we approach it, religion is discovered to be nothing but imagination.

*B.—SEPARATION OF RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE FROM THE  
KNOWLEDGE OF THE WORLD.*

We have endeavoured to point out some of the consequences of the epistemological principle laid down by Ritschl, that all knowledge is restricted to phenomena. He himself, indeed, has neither drawn nor intended the consequences in question; but inasmuch as they follow by logical necessity from the premises adopted by him, those premises must clearly be unsound. That principle cannot surely be tenable which compels a theologian on pain of inconsistency to treat the idea of God, the substance of Christology with its related doctrines, and the belief in providence, revelation, and even a soul, nay, every species of religion, as mere subjective representation, and therefore destitute of objective reality.

§ 57. *Consequences following from Ritschl's second epistemological canon, that religious and theoretical knowledge are to be separated.*

The other epistemological principle which Ritschl has adopted as a canon of method in theology, is that of the separation

of religious from mundane or scientific knowledge. In his view, theoretical knowledge cannot conduct the mind either to God or to religious truth. Religious knowledge, on the contrary, is grounded exclusively on the moral consciousness; for it is only in the moral consciousness that the roots of religion itself are to be found. "All religions aspire, with the aid of the higher powers which man reverences, to the solution of the contradiction which he recognises as existing between himself as part of the natural world and himself as a spiritual personality claiming to rule the world. Considered from the one point of view, man is a part of nature, without independence, hemmed in on all hands by other things: considered from the other point of view, that is, as spirit, his aim and destiny are to assert and maintain his independence. Situated thus, there springs up in him the faith in superior spiritual powers by whose help his own power is in some way or other to be supplemented, or raised to the rank of a whole *sui generis*, capable of resisting the pressure of the natural world."<sup>1</sup> Lipsius also represents religion in like manner as originating in a contrast which man endeavours by thought and action to reconcile; religion is the effort to effect the reconciliation. "Not the consciousness of dependence *per se*, but the consciousness of the contrast between man's inner freedom and his outward dependence on nature, is the true root of religion."<sup>2</sup>

This view of the origin of religion is a modification of one of Kant's ideas. One of the things postulated by the practical reason, he tells us, is the existence of God as a cause of nature distinct from nature,—a cause which brings nature into harmony with morality, and thus supplies a basis for the concord of happiness with duty.<sup>3</sup> In his view, therefore, the assumption of a wise author of the world reconciles

<sup>1</sup> *Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, vol. iii. p. 186. See Note 48 in Appendix.

<sup>2</sup> *Lehrbuch der evang.-protestantischen Dogmatik*, 2nd ed. § 18. See Note 49 in Appendix.

<sup>3</sup> Kant, *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft*, Th. i. Bd. ii., 2 Hauptstück v.

a contrast whose complete resolution is reserved for the future life. According to Ritschl and Lipsius, God is the guarantor of a conciliation that is to be accomplished in the present life, inasmuch as He ensures our personal independence over against the hindrances of nature—which, in the view of the former, is itself eternal life.<sup>1</sup>

In both cases, however, in the one as truly as in the other,<sup>2</sup> morality is the primary and original, religion the secondary and derived. According to Ritschl, man is in the contradictory position of being at one and the same time part of nature and yet independent of nature: when he begins to reflect on this position of his, and seeks to safeguard his independence relatively to nature and its power, religion comes into existence. If this derivation of religion from the moral consciousness be correct, it is founded on an act of reflection. But to account for religion in this way is altogether to mistake its real nature. The inner necessitation which is characteristic of the religious impulse is proof enough that religion is not a product of reflection, but an absolutely original and immediate fact of human consciousness that precedes all reflection—it is an original tie, linking man on to God, an original determination of man by God. Schleiermacher's definition by no means exhausts the full contents of religion; but certainly the abiding truth of his theology lies in its having successfully asserted for religion the quality of an original independent element of human nature: "an individual feature with roots and energy of its own," a determination of the immediate self-consciousness, a fact of the immediate as distinguished from the reflective life, in opposition alike to one-sided ethicism and to abstract illuminism.<sup>3</sup> With all the energy and enthusiasm of a re-

<sup>1</sup> *Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, vol. iii. p. 259.

<sup>2</sup> See Note 50 in Appendix.

<sup>3</sup> Schleiermacher, *Der christliche Glaube*, § 3. *Ueber die Religion*, Zweite Rede; cf. W. Dilthey, *Leben Schleiermacher's*, Bd. i. p. 383.

former, he stirred up his contemporaries to the recognition of this great fact, and thus emancipated theology from the rationalism and moralism, not only of the pre-Kantian, but also of the Kantian period. When modern theologians, who are ready enough to invoke the authority of Schleiermacher, represent religion as owing its existence to an act of reflection, they, to that extent, retrograde to a stage of development earlier than that to which Protestant theology was carried forward by Schleiermacher.

Still further, if religion is based on an act of reflection, it must be a product of the human mind—something that man makes for himself and gives to himself. In this case the nature of man is conceived as a thing complete and finished before it gives itself a religion, or surrenders itself to a religion; religion is superadded as a complement; the reason for its adoption or creation being, that man has not in himself power sufficient to maintain himself in opposition to the pressure of the natural world: he seeks accordingly to supplement his own deficiencies by the help of higher powers. In fact, his own personality would not be safe without faith in God, though that personality exists quite independently of religion. If the consciousness of God is not an essential element of the human mind, the human mind may lose that consciousness, and yet remain essentially unchanged.<sup>1</sup>

But this whole mode of conceiving the origin of religion is self-contradictory. To represent religion as a product of the human spirit, is as contradictory as to say that human reason is a product of the human mind; or as it would be to sketch a situation in which man is placed, and then to say, "In this situation or under these circumstances human reason comes into existence." How could the human mind beget reason if it were not already rational? Who would undertake to teach any one reason, if he could not take for granted that he already possessed reason? So with religion; it always

<sup>1</sup> See Note 51 in Appendix.

presupposes its own existence, and cannot therefore be introduced into man by means of revelation. No revelation whatever from without could make a man religious, unless religion constituted an essential element of his nature. Religion belongs originally to man, yea, forms part of the very substance of his spiritual nature. He must not be thought of as first existing, and then forming a religion for the sake of preserving his personal prerogatives and worth intact; no, he stands originally in a relation to God which does not owe its existence to Him—a relation of which he becomes conscious as the primary and fundamental fact of his spiritual life. This is what all revelation necessarily presupposes. Enfolded within the human consciousness lies the consciousness of God no less than that of the world. The human mind would not be human were it destitute of this consciousness of God; it is alone through his relation to God and his relation to the world—to both alike—that man attains to the consciousness of himself.<sup>1</sup>

It is utterly inconceivable that a consciousness of God should arise in man through any sort of reflection or inference or postulate. How could he postulate the existence of a God without first having some notion of God? But such a notion—how could it arise in man, if it were not a part of the original furniture of his constitution? It could not possibly be derived by mere abstraction from what is finite and sensuous. One might as well attempt to give self-consciousness to a being which has it not already, as to give a consciousness of God to man if it were not a part of his original endowment. Self-consciousness can be awakened and developed; it can never be produced or imported: so with the consciousness of God. But if we were to interpret Ritschl as meaning that the consciousness of God is developed in man by reflection on the contrast to which he refers, this would imply that such consciousness, and therefore also religion, already existed and

<sup>1</sup> See Note 52 in Appendix.

only needed evoking; consequently, the existence of that whose origin is to be explained would be presupposed, and the explanation therefore be made null and void.

We shall have to fall back, therefore, on ideas which have long ago been advanced by inquirers whose thinking unquestionably did more than merely skim the surface of things. The mind or consciousness of man posits God *naturâ suâ*; it does so in virtue of a necessity that links and binds it to God before man begins either to think or know.<sup>1</sup> It has been asked, How does the human mind arrive at the idea of God? The human mind does not *arrive at* that idea at all; we ought rather to say that it is, so to speak, originally touched with, stirred by God; that God belongs to consciousness. The primitive consciousness must therefore be affirmed to be monotheistic; a monotheism cleaves to it which, so far from being an accident, forms part of the very substance of mind.<sup>2</sup> Religion is as old as man himself, and is inseparable from him.<sup>3</sup> There is an original certitude of God which is totally independent of man's will or liking; and this certitude may be regarded as an indestructible part and residue of that knowledge of God which is the result and effect of the natural and necessary rapport between the creature and the Creator.<sup>4</sup> Primitive man could no more have invented and produced his language and religion for himself in his original condition than in his secondary or fallen state:—to say so is as irrational as it would be to say that he could have invented and produced himself. On the contrary, we find all nations agreeing, first, in the recognition of some sort of a deity; secondly, in the observance of some mode of worship designed to maintain a normal connection between themselves and God; and thirdly, in the belief that

<sup>1</sup> Schelling, *Philosophie der Offenbarung, Werke*, Abth. 2, vol. iii. p. 191.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* vol. i. p. 186 f. See also Note 53 in Appendix.

<sup>3</sup> F. von Baader, *Sämmtliche Werke*, vol. ix. p. 363.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* vol. viii. p. 23.



the cultus observed by them was not a thing of their own invention, but primarily enjoined by the God whom they served.<sup>1</sup>

Even in Kant's system, the inadequacy of attempts to build religion on the foundation of the moral consciousness is evident enough. Were it not a postulate of our moral reason that the happiness which every rational creature desires should follow necessarily upon the fulfilment of the moral law, and be realized in exact proportion to that fulfilment, what need, according to Kantian principles, would there be for a God at all? According to this view of the matter, there is no connection between God and moral beings except this moral connection.<sup>2</sup>

Ritschl's theory of the origin of religion is exactly analogous to this. If man were not under the necessity of maintaining himself as a moral being, and if he did not to this end need protection and help against the powers of nature, he would not need a God, and religion would be a complete superfluity. Should civilisation ever progress far enough to furnish him with the means of so taming the forces of nature as to secure himself against their assaults, religion would become *ipso facto* unnecessary. How one-sided is this view of the case needs scarcely to be remarked. As though man could be, could exist at all, without God: as though he were not as to his entire being and life dependent on God and conditioned by God; and as though every cry for help to God did not spring out of a consciousness that man is by very essence bound to God. To imagine that a firmer basis is laid for religion in the mind of modern humanity by reducing it to the scant contents assigned it in Ritschl's system, is an utter mistake; its value, on the contrary, is thereby made merely relative and problematical. But for the hindrances thrown in his way by nature, man would want neither religion nor God:

<sup>1</sup> F. von Baader, *Sämmtliche Werke*, vol. ix. p. 362 f.

<sup>2</sup> Schelling, *Werke*, Abth. 2, Bd. iv. p. 199. See also Note 54 in Appendix.

he would be sufficient to himself. Faith in God from this point of view is a mere stopgap. But if that be the case, the task devolves on humanity of pressing forwards to a stage at which it may hope to be able to safeguard and help itself without recourse to God.<sup>1</sup>

§ 58. *Ritschl's derivation of religion takes away its obligatoriness, alters its contents, and changes its essential nature.*

Such a derivation further empties both faith in God and, of course, religion of objective obligation. Kant saw and declared plainly enough, that so far as the existence of God is a postulate of the practical reason, the moral necessity for the assumption is altogether "subjective, that is, a need; not objective, that is, a duty." He also conceded that, as far as the theoretical reason is concerned, this assumption, viewed as an explanation, is a mere hypothesis.<sup>2</sup> God is a hypothesis. But a French astronomer remarked to Napoleon, "*Je n'ai pas en besoin de cette hypothèse.*" In Ritschl's system, too, God holds the position of reason or explanatory ground of a relation of nature to man, which safeguards the rights and privileges of the human personality against the power of nature. But this assumption is, after all, only a subjective requirement; it cannot be insisted on as an objective duty. How very different is the case if man possesses a radical conviction and certainty of the existence of God inseparable from his very nature! *Deus esse non creditur sed scitur.* This certitude involves the categorical imperative that it be recognised, and the objective obligation to surrender oneself believingly to God. Thus regarded, religion becomes an associative force, which, in virtue of the bond linking the whole race of man to God, unites the multitude of separate individuals to each other, independently of mere personal likes or dislikes,

<sup>1</sup> See Note 55 in Appendix.

<sup>2</sup> Kant, *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft*, 4th ed. p. 226 f.

whereas a religious union grounded solely on subjective needs can never be anything more than a kind of voluntary association or club. What Ritschl sets aside by his derivation of religion, is the catholicity of faith in God. In its very origin it is stamped as an affair of private circles alone. His view of the origin of religion undermines, at starting, the very foundation of that community and fellowship on which he lays so much stress as a characteristic of the Christian religion.

If Ritschl's theory of the origin of religion be accepted, a different view will have to be taken of the nature of religion itself. It must consist primarily in a relation to the world, not in a relation to God. We are accustomed to define religion as a "relation between man and God." According to Ritschl, that is mysticism. Regarded thus, he says, "It is of the nature of that mystical state, in which the soul that has the vision of God so contemplated Him as though it alone were viewed by God, and as if besides God and it nothing else existed." Schleiermacher's explanation of religion as the feeling of absolute dependence on God, rather confirmed than discredited this method. Ritschl, on the contrary, asserts emphatically that "the circle within which a religion can be completely realized must necessarily be so described as to pass through the three points—God, man, the world." According to him, however, the world holds the very front place—it is not secondary or subsequent. For, "more exactly viewed, every religion as such consists in the effort to attain to good, or to a supreme good, which either belongs to the world or is intelligible solely as compared with it; and this effort plants itself on the foundation of divinity (*göttliches Wesen*), which promises to man a more comprehensive sway over the world than by and of himself he can realize."<sup>1</sup> There can be no question that the spiritual dominion over the world, which with Ritschl becomes possible through the kingdom of God as

<sup>1</sup> *Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, vol. iii. p. 27 f.

"the supreme good," can only be understood when looked at in the light of the world. But if this be so, man's relation to the world supplies not only the impulse to religion, but constitutes also its very substance and goal. As compared therewith, the notion of a divine being is nothing more than supplementary: God and the relation into which man enters with Him are a further means to the end. It is therefore quite in harmony with his conception of religion, when, in setting forth the nature of the Christian religion, our author teaches that God finds the end of His own being in that which constitutes the proper end of man's being.<sup>1</sup> God is not the one who exists for His own sake, but the one who exists for the sake of others; it is in that which constitutes the end of man's being that He first finds the end of His own: He exists to the end that He may bring about that for the sake of which man exists. Usually we are taught that "man finds the supreme end of his existence in surrender to God." Ritschl inverts this, and teaches that God finds the end of His existence in the end of man's existence, *i.e.* really, in self-surrender to man. According to this view, God is for man simply a means to an end. The anthropocentric principle of Kant is thus carried out even as regards the relation of man to God.

Ritschl assures us, however, that even the human personality can never be rightly regarded as a mere means, but must always be treated as an end in itself: how much more incompatible, then, with the nature of the divine being, the absolute end and goal of all being, to represent it as a mere means to an end! Such a conception is a self-contradiction. It is a contradiction also of religion itself—religion, whose very essence is to set forth self-surrender to God as the highest end of man's existence—thus to translate it into a relation to the world. Ritschl does not mean, indeed, to represent it as consisting solely in a relation to the world.

<sup>1</sup> Compare chap. iii. A of this work.

Whereas, however, ordinarily religion is regarded as a relation to God which manifests and proves itself in the relation to the world, according to Ritschl we are concerned in religion with a relation to the world which owes its possibility to help derived from God. In this way the secondary is raised to the rank of the primary, and the primary reduced to that of the secondary. The relations in which religion manifests itself and is realized are thus shifted—inverted. As a result, everything that concerns Christianity is thus set in a false light. For, naturally enough, the conception we form of the work accomplished by the founder of the Christian religion will be determined thereby. He cannot have conferred on or done for humanity anything that lies outside the essence of religion: all He did was truly to realize that essence. And, just as the author's conception of religion would have led us to expect, we find in his representation of the Christian religion, where "the Christian goal" is identified with "dominion over the world,"<sup>1</sup> the relation to God thrust into the background; the relation to the world, on the contrary, brought to the very front. But if religion be primarily defined as a relation of man to the world, the natural consequence is, that transcendent realities are thrust into the background, and that religion is represented as something exclusively concerned with relations immanent to the world. One cannot accordingly be surprised if, as a further result, the Christian religion should come to be conceived after a manner which savours largely of the cosmic and profane, and goes far to secularize not only individual Christian institutions, but even Christianity itself.

<sup>1</sup> *Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, vol. iii. p. 546.

§ 59. *The consequence that follows from Ritschl's derivation of religion from the relation between it and morality.*

The content of religion is defined by Ritschl in a way that tends to eliminate or atrophy the very essence of religion itself. But there is a still further question: What effect has his derivation of religion on *the relation between religion and morality*? He supposes religion to consist in efforts after a good to be realized by the human race in its relation to the world,—which good is unattainable without divine help. That which man seeks after in religion, therefore, is to be found not in God, but outside God; and the function of God is to aid him in the search. This view of the matter separates elements which are necessarily conjoined: for fellowship with God is the highest good; it is itself the blessedness towards which religions yearningly point. At the same time, Ritschl tells us that religion is based on the moral consciousness. Now there is nothing morally good save a good will:<sup>1</sup> a moral will is a will directed to the morally good, and a moral impulse is one that impels men to will the morally good. Now the absolutely good is God Himself; and a will that is truly one with the absolutely good, in other words, virtue in the highest sense, needs not to seek for blessedness outside itself; it is itself blessedness. When, on the contrary, religion is regarded as the effort to secure good that bears on man's relation to and place in the world, it is traced back to an impulse which does not exhibit the character of a moral motive, inasmuch as it is directed not to the morally good, but to the wellbeing of the individual, in other words, to the satisfaction of eudæmonistic desires. His attempt to show that religion is based on and derived from morality is consequently a total failure. According to his principles, it is rooted, not in morality, but in a eudæmonistic impulse.<sup>2</sup> From this it follows that instead of morality generating and

<sup>1</sup> See Note 56 in Appendix.

<sup>2</sup> See Note 57 in Appendix.



confirming religion, it ought rather to aim at throwing it off as a hindrance and foe. The explanation of religion, therefore, which was to establish it on a firm basis, lands us at last in the denial of religion.

Ritschl's derivation of religion from the moral consciousness is in all these respects a failure. It involves the denial of the originality of man's consciousness of God; it sets aside the objective obligation of faith in God; it impairs the very essence of religion by giving chief prominence to that aspect of it which relates to the world; and, finally, it contradicts itself by substituting for the moral impulse with which it starts, an impulse that cannot be accounted moral.

§ 60. *With this faulty derivation of religion is further connected a mistaken definition of the relation of religious to theoretical knowledge.*

This mistaken derivation of religion naturally involves a mistaken determination of the relation between religious and theoretical knowledge.

If religious knowledge has no other groundwork than the moral consciousness, it evidently cannot be a knowledge of what actually is, but only of that which ought to be—of that, namely, which must be postulated, if the moral consciousness is to be guarded. Religious knowledge, therefore, is altogether taken up with *value-judgments* (*Werthurtheile*); nay more, as Ritschl more exactly defines them, “with independent judgments as to value, bearing upon man's relation to the world, and evoking feelings of pleasure or pain, in which man either enjoys dominion over the world secured by divine help, or suffers the grievous experience of a lack of divine help to that end.”<sup>1</sup> Consequently the knowledge of God “can only then be shown to be religious knowledge when God is conceived as guaranteeing to the believer a position in the

<sup>1</sup> *Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, vol. iii. p. 192.

world such as counterbalances the hindrances which arise from the world. Apart from this value-judgment through faith, there is no knowledge of God which can be considered worthy of the name."<sup>1</sup> Religious knowledge has for its subject "the relation of the blessedness guaranteed by God and aimed at by man, to the entirety of the world created by God and directed to the end He has in view." "Scientific knowledge, on the contrary, aims at the discovery of the laws of nature and mind by observation, and takes for granted that observation will be conducted in harmony with the recognised laws of human intelligence."<sup>2</sup>

This definition of the relation between the two domains involves a restriction of "theoretical or philosophical knowledge," which materially deviates from the traditional view.

Ritschl denies to metaphysics any knowledge either of God or of any other intellectual or moral realities, inasmuch as the distinction between spirit and nature is of no import to metaphysics, which is concerned solely with the "settlement of the common conditions under which the phenomena of spirit and nature can be known," or the "forms which arise *à priori* in the human mind when engaged in the process of cognition," and "in which the intellect marches over the formless flux of sensations and perceptions to a determination of definite objects of representation."<sup>3</sup> "Metaphysical conceptions, accordingly, are simply elementary cognitions, by means of which the objects of knowledge are fixed as such, as things in general, first in their isolation from each other, and then in their actual relation to each other."<sup>4</sup> All this we have heard before. It is neither more nor less than the Kantian reduction of metaphysics to a theory of cognition, which Ritschl has adopted.<sup>5</sup> But as the Kantian theory of cognition has been shown to be unsound, the foundation is

<sup>1</sup> *Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, vol. iii. p. 198.

<sup>2</sup> *Theologie und Metaphysik*, p. 6.

<sup>3</sup> See Note 58 in Appendix.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 193.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 28.

withdrawn from beneath the conception of metaphysics which that theory implied. Nor is the state of the case affected by making ontology and cosmology subdivisions of metaphysics, after the example of Lotze: the conception of metaphysics remains the same, for all that the distinction amounts to is that in ontology metaphysics has to determine or fix the objects of representation; whilst in cosmology its business is to reduce the multiplicity of perceived and represented objects to the unity of a cosmos.<sup>1</sup> But as, according to Lotze, psychology is the third division of metaphysics,<sup>2</sup> it follows that Ritschl's assertion that metaphysics is indifferent to the distinction between nature and spirit would secure no support from him. And as to his appeal in favour of his position to Aristotle—it rests on a complete misunderstanding of the contents of the Aristotelian metaphysics.<sup>3</sup> The subject of Aristotle's metaphysics or *philosophia prima*, is Being as such, τὸ ὄν ἢ ὅν = *ens, quatenus est ens*, Being in its character or quality as being.<sup>4</sup> The science of being is the science of the principles or supreme causes of what exists—it investigates τὰς ἀρχὰς or τοῦ ὄντος ἢ ὄν τὰς πρώτας αἰτίας.<sup>5</sup> According to the intention of the Aristotelian philosophy, Being is not merely that which the cognizing subject represents to itself as being, but that which has being in itself and independently of our consciousness; and the ἀρχαί or principles of being are not formal conditions of cognition imposed by the peculiar nature of the human mind, but the objective and real principles of all being.<sup>6</sup> Ritschl asserts that Aristotle regarded the *philosophia prima* or metaphysics as a kind of knowledge inferior in value to the philosophy of nature and mind;<sup>7</sup> whereas in

<sup>1</sup> *Theologie und Metaphysik*, p. 7.

<sup>2</sup> Lotze, *Metaphysik*, Buch iii. p. 469 ff.

<sup>3</sup> *Theologie und Metaphysik*, p. 6.

<sup>4</sup> *Aristotelis Metaphysica*, recogn. Bonitz, lib. iv. cap. i.; lib. vi. cap. i.; lib. xi. cap. iii.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* lib. iv. cap. i.

<sup>6</sup> See Note 59 in Appendix.

<sup>7</sup> *Theologie und Metaphysik*, p. 6.

his classification of philosophical sciences he repeatedly and in the clearest terms characterizes the "prima philosophia" as the highest and most valuable division of philosophy.<sup>1</sup> How far he was from regarding it as a mere science of the forms of cognition, is sufficiently evident from the circumstance, that in giving it the precedence over all other sciences, he further describes it as the *ἐπιστήμη θεολογική*, *theological science*.<sup>2</sup> In pursuance of his preconceived conception of metaphysics, Ritschl censures Aristotle for including therein a doctrine of God.<sup>3</sup> He counts it therefore a fault of his not to have excluded from theology, as he understood it, the doctrine of God,—with which impossible demand he plainly demonstrates the futility of his own judgment of Aristotle's philosophy.

Ritschl, moreover, himself allows that the forms of cognition are not the sole subject of Aristotle's "philosophia prima," when he remarks that "this discipline is devoted to the investigation of the general grounds of all being." But he forthwith quits this position, and, as it were with a leap, converts the "general grounds of all being or existence" into formal conditions of cognition, which take their rise in the human mind itself.<sup>4</sup>

Aristotle's "metaphysics" has served as a "lesson-book for all ages," and has proved itself for centuries, yea, for millennia, a whetstone of the human understanding. Ritschl's treatment of this work furnishes a characteristic example of the subjective bias of his thinking in general. One is tempted to refer, by way of comparison, to the use he has made of Luther,<sup>5</sup> to the interpretations he gives of Biblical passages, and altogether to the way in which he appeals to the authority of Scripture in favour of his opinions. But the institu-

<sup>1</sup> See Note 60 in Appendix.

<sup>2</sup> *Aristotelis Metaphysica*, lib. iv. 13, cap. i. 1026, a. 19; lib. xi. cap. vii. 1064, b. 3.

<sup>3</sup> *Theologie und Metaphysik*, p. 7 ff.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* p. 6.

<sup>5</sup> See Note 61 in Appendix.

tion of such comparisons would draw us aside from the line of inquiry which we have prescribed for ourselves in the present work.

We are concerned for the moment, not with Ritschl's use of Luther, nor with his relation to the Bible, but with his conception of metaphysics; and we have now reached a point from which we can take a survey of his attitude towards metaphysics in general.

§ 61. *Ritschl's attitude towards metaphysics.*

Metaphysical knowledge, as hitherto understood, has been held to be the knowledge of transcendent realities. Such knowledge Ritschl expels from theology on the pretence of its being an unjustifiable intrusion of metaphysics. A consistent application of his conception of metaphysics would rather require him to teach that what is commonly understood by that term has nowhere a better claim to recognition than it has in theology. He excludes all such knowledge from theology; but he does not proceed consistently. To be consistent, he ought to deny to religion all relation to transcendent realities; in that way he would rob theology of its object, and the necessity would arise of substituting for the traditional objects a psychological description of certain phenomena of consciousness. On the other hand, he may with good right repel the accusation that his purpose is to banish metaphysics altogether from theology. In fact, he builds his entire system on a foundation of metaphysics; but it is metaphysics as interpreted by himself, that is to say, an aggregate of certain epistemological principles. In the very act, however, of laying such a foundation, he implicitly banishes objective truth from every department of theological and religious knowledge. On the one hand, therefore, he expels from theology a metaphysic without which it cannot exist; on the other hand, he mixes with theology a false

metaphysic; and alike by his false negation and his false position, he conducts theology into a path which, if followed out, necessarily leads to its utter dissolution. In fact, on either side his attitude towards "metaphysics in theology" must be pronounced a mistake. What he teaches and what he omits to teach, what he affirms and what he denies, is equally fatal to theology.

But a still further inconsequence is involved in this conception of metaphysics on behalf of which he falsely appeals to Aristotle. If its subject-matter be exclusively the formal conditions of cognition, the doctrine of God is *ipso facto* excluded, not only from metaphysics, but also from philosophy altogether. In that case, "theoretical or philosophical knowledge" is knowledge of the world—nothing else. But on Ritschl's own showing, it is impossible for mere world-knowledge either to discover a supreme law of existence, or to construct a view of the world as a whole; and his assertion, that when philosophy professes to present such a view of the world as a whole it does so under impulses drawn from religion, only amounts to a positive supplement of the negative statement just adduced.<sup>1</sup>

At the same time, an empirical conception of philosophy is adopted, which even our examination of the system of Lotze showed to be thoroughly untenable. It is a necessity lying in the very nature of philosophical knowledge, that it should rise from the individual and conditioned to the unconditioned. This has always been the real import and purpose of philosophical inquiries. By taking up the position above described, therefore, Ritschl has set himself in antagonism to the history of philosophy during more than two thousand years. From Plato and Aristotle down to Kant the knowledge of God and of His relation to the world in its entirety, has always been regarded as a necessary aim of philosophy; and scarcely were Kant's eyes closed before the great objects which he imagined

<sup>1</sup> *Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, vol. iii. p. 194.



himself to have for ever excluded from its domain again became matter of absorbing interest; nay, even Kant himself maintains that the idea of God is a necessary idea of the theoretical reason, though he also teaches that its objective reality cannot be demonstrated. He granted that human reason shows a natural inclination to transcend the boundary line of experience, and that transcendental ideas are as natural to it as the categories are to the understanding.<sup>1</sup> The opinion, therefore, that a notion of God and the idea of the world as one great whole are foreign to the theoretical reason, and embody solely an acquisition of religious knowledge, should be repudiated even on Kantian principles, and be treated as a piece of hyper-Kantian exaggeration. Even in Lotze's hands, who as to epistemological principles follows in Kant's footsteps, theoretical philosophy arrives at an ultimate principle, a one ground of the world, and, to that extent, at an all-embracing view of the world as a whole. And among theologians who may be regarded as dominated by Neo-Kantian principles, Lipsius has distinctly affirmed that theoretical world-knowledge has an interest of its own in attaining to an ultimate and unconditioned principle, and that the effort of the human mind to bring its knowledge to completion or consummation is not dictated exclusively by practical considerations.<sup>2</sup>

For the sake of upholding his definition of the relation between theoretical and religious knowledge, Ritschl was compelled to narrow the domain of the former by excluding from it knowledge that necessarily belongs to it, and assigning it to the latter domain. Theoretical knowledge he therefore treats as exclusively concerned with the world; nay more, it is concerned solely with the individual factors which constitute the world, not with the world as a whole, as a

<sup>1</sup> *Kritik der reinen Vernunft. Anhang zur transcendentalen Dialektik*, p. 670.

<sup>2</sup> Lipsius, *Philosophie und Religion*, p. 109 f.

unity. Whilst the sphere of theoretical knowledge is thus narrowed, that of religious knowledge is not really widened, but the distinction between the two, and their antagonism to each other, are made all the more marked and definite. Nor does the antagonism consist solely in the fact that certain objects which were once supposed to be embraced in the theoretical domain are now relegated exclusively to that of religion; no, the difference is qualitative as well as quantitative. The kind of knowledge attained in the one domain is different from that acquired in the other; the ways of knowing differ. Theoretical knowledge is a knowledge of the laws of nature and man derived from observation and experience; religious knowledge, on the contrary, consists solely of "value-judgments" (*Werthurtheile*), that is, statements or judgments as to the value of particular objects for our moral consciousness.

One can easily see how plausible a distinction and separation like this may be made to appear. It seems to promise great advantages. Above all, religious certitude seems thus to be made entirely independent of the objections of science, and conflicts between the two domains to be rendered once for all impossible. Thus regarded, religious truth neither needs nor, in fact, tolerates justification before the forum of theoretical knowledge. Apologetics may in this sense be simply set aside as a useless expenditure of trouble.

We have found, however, that to make the moral consciousness the basis of religion, as Ritschl attempts to do, so far from rendering the position of the latter impregnable, really leads to its overthrow. Even the distinction drawn between theoretical and religious knowledge, according to which the latter not only does not include anything theoretical, but is even a different and opposed mode of activity—even this distinction is untenable. What it signifies, what is its value, has been made sufficiently clear in the course of our criticism on the Kantian philosophy. That philosophy

may be regarded as the genuine and comprehensive, the abidingly valid, yea, one may well say, the monumental outcome and expression of this separation of religious from theoretical truth. By its means the scientific intelligence of modern times has once for all put this separation to the test, sounded its meaning, ascertained what it secures for us. The logical issue, as we found, is to abolish the objective truth of religious knowledge, and to convert it into mere subjective representations or fancies. This issue found historical embodiment in the Neo-Kantism of Lange and Vaihinger, who relegated religious truth to the sphere of poetry, of the free creative imagination. At the heart of the antagonism posited by Kant between theoretical and religious truth there lies a contradiction which presses imperatively for a solution.

Ritschl's theology treads again the same path; and, like his predecessors, he is inevitably landed in the same conclusion.<sup>1</sup> In one respect, however, Ritschl differs from Kant. To the more general contradictions which are involved in the position as laid down by Kant, he adds a new one of his own; for he tries to bridge over the gulf by a method which brings him into fresh conflict with the principles from which he started. What he regards as his bridge is this, "that theoretical knowledge recognises and accepts the reality of the life of the spirit as a datum alongside of that of nature;" and that, granted the reality of the spiritual life, we have a right to infer, not merely the existence of God in general, but also the truth of the Christian idea of God; which inference is also valid for theoretical thought.<sup>2</sup>

After having demonstrated, as he thought, the invalidity of the theoretical arguments for the existence of God, Kant brought forward a moral proof. This moral proof neither had nor was supposed to have theoretical validity; but all that he accomplishes is to show that the assumption of the exist-

<sup>1</sup> See Note 62 in Appendix.

<sup>2</sup> *Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, vol. iii. p. 207 ff.

ence of God is necessary for subjective-practical purposes. On this view of the matter, the idea of God is simply an affair of practical faith. But as to "proving the reality of God in distinction from establishing the necessity of thinking Him in order to the explanation of certain relations of man to the world; as to demonstrating His actuality, in other words, as an object of theoretical thought,"—Kant neither succeeded in doing it, nor, indeed, aimed at doing it.<sup>1</sup> Ritschl, however, needs an argument that is *theoretically* valid; for what is to become of theology, of the *science* of God and Christianity, in other words, of the *theory* of Christianity, if religious convictions lie altogether outside the domain of theoretical thought? Such a thing must in the nature of the case be impossible. What steps does he take, then, to secure the required proof?

We have here reached the point at which, if anywhere, the corner-stone of Ritschl's entire theology, so far as it professes to be a theory of religious convictions, must be discovered. How far is a scientific knowledge of the Christian religion possible? In raising this question, Ritschl's natural course is again to connect the two domains which he had otherwise separated. Has he succeeded in doing so? If not, the separation on which he insisted involves the impossibility of theology. Kant refused to concede to the will any reality in the view of theoretical knowledge. Ritschl, on the contrary, tells us that, "alongside of the reality of nature, theoretical thought is bound also to recognise the reality of the spiritual life—to accept it as a datum; and to acknowledge that the laws peculiar to the one domain are as obligatory as the laws peculiar to the other domain."<sup>2</sup> In other words, it is the duty of theoretical thought to treat the spiritual life as an actuality. If only it were as easy to do so as Ritschl seems to imagine! The corner-stone of the Kantian *Critique of Reason* is, that mind itself, the soul itself, is a mere pheno-

<sup>1</sup> *Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, vol. iii. p. 206 f.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 207.

menon. This being so, we know ourselves, not as we are in ourselves, but merely as we appear to ourselves.<sup>1</sup>

Any one who, like Kant, restricts human knowledge to the phenomenal, must inevitably relegate mind or spirit, so far as it claims to be an object of knowledge, to the same domain. The phenomenal, not only according to Kant, but also according to Ritschl, is purely subjective—that which exists solely in human representation, which has no objective reality. Add to this, that Ritschl pronounces things-in-themselves pure abstractions. So far, therefore, as we are concerned with mind or spirit as a thing-in-itself in contrast to phenomenon, it must also be regarded as a mere idea or representation. Nay more, he further tells us that the thing-in-itself, so far as it is conceived as the meeting-point or union of a particular sum of phenomena, is nothing but a product of our mind: it is we who combine the phenomena, and thus create unity. Consequently mind also, as being the point of unity of phenomena of the mental life, is a merely represented unity.<sup>2</sup>

This being so, agreeably to the conditions laid down by Ritschl, theoretical thought not only cannot establish the objective reality of mind, but must actually deny it.

§ 62. *The argument for the existence of God, based on the reality of mind for theoretical thought, thus rendered invalid.*

As this argument was based on the assumption that the spiritual life is real for theoretical thought, it is clearly undermined and overthrown. But even if the assumption in question were admitted, the argument based on it would be invalid.

It is, in Ritschl's view, a universal law that "the life of

<sup>1</sup> Alb. Lange, *Geschichte des Materialismus*, Aufl. 3, Buch ii. p. 60. Cf. first section, part second, chap. ii. of this work.

<sup>2</sup> Compare p. 237 of the present work.

spirit should be the end or goal, and nature the means to that end." Now, either "the estimate formed of itself by mind and its corresponding behaviour as entitled to hold rule over nature" is a baseless fancy, "or when mind thus acts it is proceeding in harmony with the truth and in conformity with the supreme law—a law which holds good also for nature. In the latter case, its ultimate root must lie in a divine will which constituted and overrules the world in the interest of the life of spirit as its final end." This, we are told, is a "logical inference from data of the mental life of man that cannot be ignored,"—"data which lie quite apart from any religious view of the world, and the explanation of which is either impossible, or must be sought in the scientific hypothesis of the idea of God."<sup>1</sup>

The inconclusiveness of this reasoning becomes obvious at a glance. When it is pronounced a moral postulate that nature should hold the position of means, spirit that of end, it is not meant that the relation of mind to nature thus demanded, and which is involved in the estimate which mind forms of itself, is an actual reality which theoretical thought is bound to accept as a datum. On the contrary, it is merely a value-judgment pronounced by mind on itself. The relation in question is not a given actuality, nor can it be treated as such by theoretical thought; consequently no valid theoretical inference can be drawn from it. Yet, on a relation that is theoretically insecure, Ritschl grounds a "scientific hypothesis," namely, "the hypothesis of the idea of God." This hypothesis, therefore, hangs in the air. If, however, it be necessary to assume that nature exists and is constituted with a view to spirit as its final goal, this might be accounted for on the principle of pantheistic determinism; but there would then be no need whatever of transcending the idea of an immanent ground of the world. But why should any explanation at all be sought? Even if it were a demonstrable

<sup>1</sup> *Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, vol. iii. p. 208 f.



fact that spirit is the final cause or ultimate reason of matter, what is there to necessitate our going on to ask for an explanation? "The business of metaphysics is to investigate the inner order of given data, not to derive or deduce them from something that is not given;"—this is what Ritschl, in agreement with Lotze, lays down.<sup>1</sup> It is clear, therefore, that a theoretical proof of the reality of the idea of God, if such proof means the deduction of a given actuality from what is not a given actuality, is discredited *a priori*; and that, according to Ritschl's own declaration, it can only be regarded as "false metaphysics."

Besides, he had himself further explained the sense in which he understands the proof of the reality of the idea of God as advanced by him. All that it accomplishes is to "show that if theoretical thought is ever to solve the problem of the world as a whole, it will have to fall back on the Christian view of God, of the world, and of human destiny." This case "contains within itself a recognition of the reality of God as theoretical knowledge; whereas the converse case of a rejection of this divine ground of the world-order involves a renunciation of any completed theoretical knowledge of the world as a whole."<sup>2</sup>

Yet Ritschl has devoted a special section of his chief work to the question of the relation between religious and theoretical knowledge, and has taught that if theoretical thought aim at reaching a definite conclusion, and at the construction of a self-consistent view of the world as a whole, it owes the impulse not to its own nature, but to religion; and that as soon as it sets about an undertaking of the kind, it forsakes the method proper to it, namely, that of observation and of the combining of the results of observation by recognised laws.<sup>3</sup> So that what in the one connection is declared to be a necessity of theoretical knowledge, in the other connection

<sup>1</sup> *Theologie und Metaphysik*, p. 37.

<sup>2</sup> *Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, vol. iii. p. 210.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* § 28, p. 193 f.

is denounced as an aberration on the part of theoretical knowledge, and a confusion of it with religious knowledge. At one time the claim advanced by philosophy to produce a self-consistent view of the world as a whole is characterized as a trespass on foreign territory—a trespass, too, which necessarily issues in a collision between philosophy and religion; at another, on the contrary, we are assured that the claim of theoretical knowledge to “solve the problem of the world” and to “comprehend the world in its totality” is both justifiable and necessary, is grounded in the very nature of theoretical thought. In fact, a theoretical argument for the reality of the idea of God is derived from this necessary claim of theoretical reason by the following process:—inasmuch as theoretical thought is bound to undertake the solution of the problem of the world, and inasmuch, further, as this task can only be accomplished if the reality of the idea of God be assumed: it is therefore a necessity for theoretical thought to recognise the existence of God. This inference rests, moreover, on a *petitio principii*; for the minor premise implicitly affirms what professes to be deduced from it. When criticizing the traditional proofs of the existence of God, Ritschl maintains that they take for granted surreptitiously what they profess to prove. It is not our business here to examine how far his contention is correct; but it is obvious enough that the argument which he sets over against those traditional ones is chargeable with the very same defect.

No; the argument is null and void. Nay more, when, in the course of his reasoning, he unites into a single domain the two departments of theoretical and religious knowledge which he had previously rigidly separated from each other, —even blaming Kant for opposing the practical to the theoretical reason, whereas in reality “the practical reason is a branch of theoretical knowledge,”<sup>1</sup>—he plainly contradicts

<sup>1</sup> *Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, vol. iii. p. 207.

and condemns the very sejunction of religious from theoretical knowledge which he himself had proclaimed. "Religion and theoretical knowledge are opposed activities of mind,"—this is what he says in the first edition of his chief work.<sup>1</sup> These exact words have disappeared from the second edition; but the thing has remained. The specific characteristic of religious knowledge as compared with theoretical knowledge, he tells us there, is that it consists in value-judgments. To do away with this difference between the two forms of knowledge, would be to change the entire character and structure of Ritschl's theology. Suppose it abolished; what would be the meaning of the assertion, for example, that the predicate *deity* applied to Christ is simply and solely a value-judgment, and not a point of theoretical knowledge?<sup>2</sup> But if the "practical reason is a branch of theoretical knowledge," religious cognitions are theoretical truths, and the aforementioned predicate "*deity*," for example, contains a theoretical and metaphysical cognition,—it is not merely a value-judgment. If this is not so, what is the point of difference between Ritschl and his opponents? For what cause has he taken up arms? Wherein consists the specific character of his theology? To us it seems to stand or fall with the separation of religious from mundane knowledge, with the antithesis between the practical and the theoretical reason.

He himself, however, cannot help toning down the antagonism and blurring the distinction between the two. For unless he had combined them into some sort of a unity, theology as a science would have been an impossibility. As a matter of fact, in the first edition of his chief work he openly confessed this. To give up the hope of converting "the religious view of the world into systematic theoretical knowledge, would not, it is true, affect its practical validity for the mind; but it would render the scientific knowledge

<sup>1</sup> *Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, vol. iii. p. 170, 1st ed.

<sup>2</sup> A fuller explanation of this will be found in § 64, p. 270 f.

of religion—that is, theology—impossible.”<sup>1</sup> Of course! If the two domains are separate one from the other, there can be no theory of religion, no science of Christianity.

§ 63. *After disjoining religion and science he again endeavours to connect them, and thus contradicts himself.*

He is therefore bound to connect the two again; but in doing so he contradicts himself. At the outset he drew a more radical and marked distinction between the two domains than even Kant; for he condemned all efforts on the part of the theoretical reason to aim at a final conclusion and a self-consistent view of the world as a whole; and wherever an inclination in this direction had manifested itself, referred it back to a religious root. Afterwards, on the contrary, he blames Kant for setting up any antithesis at all between the practical and theoretical reason, and for not rather treating the former as a branch of the latter. As regards, therefore, the relation between religious knowledge and the knowledge of the world or scientific knowledge, Ritschl is as far from laying down a self-consistent principle, as he was in regard to epistemological questions. It is certainly a material deviation from Kant to say, on the one hand, that though we can know only phenomena, and that phenomena are mere subjective representations, yet that they must also be something besides subjective representations; and further, that religious knowledge consists solely of value-judgments, and contains no theoretical or objective truth, yet that it must also contain theoretical elements. This, however, is not Kantism improved, but Kantism confused—a Kantism which neither leaves the principles on which it is based untouched, nor reasons them out to their full consequences, but prefers rather to modify and distort them, in the hope of thus arriving at what wears the appearance of an acceptable result.

<sup>1</sup> *Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, vol. iii. p. 191, 1st ed.

The result in question, however, will not bear examination. What was proposed was to bridge over the gulf between theoretical and religious thought by demanding that the former shall recognise the religious life as a given reality. On this recognition was then based an argument for the reality of the idea of God, claiming to be theoretically valid. We have convinced ourselves that this attempt is a failure. Yet this very bridge is the *conditio sine quâ non* of Ritschl's theological system, the assumption on whose validity depends the very existence of theology as a science of the Christian view of the world. With the collapse of the bridge, the whole of the theology reared on it vanishes in a bottomless abyss.

The gulf between theoretical and religious knowledge yawns before us, therefore, as impassable as ever. When a relation has once been posited between religion and theory so contradictory and exclusive as that which Ritschl posits, it is useless to attempt to connect the one with the other. Continuity is only possible between two domains if they have something in common. But so far as they have anything in common, so far would they be rooted in homogeneous, not heterogeneous mental activities; and in that case the supposed antagonism would have again disappeared. But if we persist in maintaining the abstract separation postulated by Ritschl, there is nothing for it but to deny that religious faith involves theoretical or objective knowledge. In doing so, however, we overlook the significance of one of the essential elements of religious faith. Hegel, indeed, has taken a wrong view of the relation between religion and philosophy—that is unquestionable; his view resolves religion into philosophy. But he was right when, in opposition to the one-sided emphasis laid on the moral by Kant, he endeavoured to establish a positive relation to the theoretical element in religion. Christian faith involves a theoretical element, *notitia*: without that, in fact, it would

not actually exist. It rests on, or contains within itself, the conviction that its object exists really, objectively. This conviction must not be identified with Christian faith itself—by no means; the latter consists rather in trustful self-surrender to that which is the object of faith. “Non Deum credere, religio est (Jas. ii. 19), sed in Deum credere.” But there can be no faith in God without a groundwork of knowledge of God; and were the certain assurance of the objective reality of that to which faith is directed to vanish, faith itself would vanish with it. As a mere subjective state of the soul without relation to anything objective, it would be mere illusion; and as soon as it was seen to be illusion, it would, of course, cease even to illude. To oppose religion to theoretical knowledge, in other words, to the knowledge of objective realities, leads accordingly to the destruction of religious faith, by robbing it of the objective truth which is its very life. This separation is now-a-days described as taking an *ethical view of religion*, and as the *deliverance of religion from cosmology*. But it is easy to see what this amounts to,—it is the deliverance of religion from that which has objective existence, in other words, the transmutation of religious truth into mere subjective truth,—a transmutation which destroys the very essence of religion itself.

§ 64. *Ritschl's view of religious knowledge, and its result.*

We are landed in the very same negative conclusion by the view Ritschl takes of the nature of religious knowledge. Its distinctive characteristic he places in the fact that it consists entirely in value-judgments. “All forms of religious knowledge are direct value-judgments.”<sup>1</sup>

But how are we to understand this dictum? If religious knowledge consists of value-judgments, what are we to think of that concerning which the judgment is pronounced that it

<sup>1</sup> *Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, vol. iii. pp. 198, 369, 191.



has this or that value for the religious consciousness? Only two alternatives are open to us. Either the declaration of the fact or performance which is judged to possess religious value is itself a religious judgment or it is not. *Let us suppose that it is.* Let it be granted that that to which a religious value-judgment refers, itself already has and expresses a religious value. In that case religious knowledge consists solely in predicating value of value; in other words, a value is expressed which was fixed and determined as such by a previous judgment; all that is done, therefore, is to define more exactly a value that already exists. If we ask, What is the subject to which this series of value-judgments refers? we get no answer; a subject cannot be discovered. Be the path along which we pass from value-judgment to value-judgment followed out ever so far, we never arrive at anything that does not already form part of some value-judgment or other, that has not therefore already a religious value. All that is accomplished is to formulate with ever-increasing accuracy the declaration that whatever has been found to have religious value has religious value. A formal subject to which all these value-judgments appertain as predicates exists not. The content of religious knowledge is accordingly value and nothing but value, without anything to which value belongs. So that the entire process or series of value-judgments which constitute religious knowledge hangs in the air. In fact, we are required to think predicates which are their own subject.

Or take the *other alternative*. Let it be granted that that concerning which a religious value is predicated is not itself already matter of religious knowledge, of a religious value-judgment; that, in other words, it has no religious value. In this case, religious knowledge comes into existence by, and consists in, affirming that something has a religious value which in reality has no religious value.

In the one case religious knowledge has no object; in the

second, it is a self-contradiction. If, then, all that we can say about religious knowledge is that it consists in value-judgments, there is no such thing as religious knowledge at all.

But, again, what is the exact meaning of the statement, that religious knowledge consists solely of value-judgments? What is the precise content of this declaration? What is it that is thus asserted regarding the *nature of religious knowledge*? If all that is meant be, that knowledge which has no value relatively to salvation cannot be regarded as religious knowledge at all; that accordingly many things that seem of importance and significance to the scholastic theologian should be excluded from theology as religiously considered worthless; and that the systematic presentation of the Christian faith ought to be both negatively and positively controlled and determined by the point of view in question,—were this all, it is not likely that the representatives of the churchly theology would ever have raised an objection. It is necessary, however, to add that if the canon thus set up were to be applied in a one-sided manner, it might lead to the elimination of elements which theology can ill afford to lose. But this is not the point at issue between Ritschl and his opponents. Systematic theology has for its content that which is of value and significance for human salvation;—so Ritschl tells us, and appeals to Luther for support; herein, too, he is right. So far we have no objection to raise. But what he teaches concerning the nature of religious knowledge goes much farther than that. It touches the most vital interests of theology and even of Christian faith. Let us adduce an illustration.

In predicating deity of Christ we are, according to Ritschl, pronouncing a value-judgment. What does this mean? Is Christ in Himself, objectively considered, God? No, replies Ritschl; the predicate deity merely expresses the value which Christ's human, historical work has for the mind or consciousness of the believer. Did He, then, show Himself to be God,

manifest Himself as God in and by means of this human work of His? Were that the case, He must needs have been God already; which, according to Ritschl, must be denied. Did He then gain divine dignity for Himself by the work He accomplished as a man? Has He, in consequence thereof, been exalted to the possession of a nature equal to that of God? Again we reply, No; for, as we saw above, Ritschl denies not only the pre-temporal divinity of Christ, but also a post-temporal deity,—an exaltation of Christ to the right hand of God.<sup>1</sup> If, then, deity is to be attributed to Christ, it is solely in the sense that such is the value set on Him by His Church. It cannot be regarded as in any sense an attribute objectively inhering in Christ; it denotes nothing that exists objectively and independently of our consciousness. The deity of Christ exists only in us; whatever existence it has, it owes to the religious consciousness of the Church,—it has no other. But what, then, is the worth of such a consciousness, if that to which it relates, objectively considered, has no existence?

It is now possible to form a distinct idea of the nature of a religious value-judgment as contrasted with theoretical knowledge, which, according to Ritschl, relates to that which, as objectively given, is open to observation. The value which a religious judgment of this kind expresses exists solely for the religious mind which expresses itself therein. It implies, of course, that there is a something real to which it relates; but the judgment as such affirms nothing whatever regarding the objective reality of this something; it describes solely an effect which it has produced in the mind, a feeling which has been awakened by it. Indeed, one cannot imagine it anything else if, as Ritschl tells us, the content of value-judgments in general, and therefore of religious value-judgments in particular, is a *feeling of pleasure or pain*.<sup>2</sup> Feelings which

<sup>1</sup> See chap. iii. A of this section.

<sup>2</sup> *Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, vol. iii. p. 190.

find expression in value-judgments can, of course, belong only to him who experiences them. Such feelings, however, must not be supposed to be an adequate reflection of the reality whose existence we are compelled to assume in order to explain them. "Feelings are not homogeneous with the stimulus which calls them into existence."<sup>1</sup> When, therefore, we give expression to such feelings, we affirm nothing with regard to the nature of the object by which they have been awakened. In no respect have we transcended the limits of our own subjectivity. To appeal to inner experience does not alter the state of matters; for it is our feelings that constitute the matter or stuff of inner experience. If, then, religious value-judgments are the expression of feelings of pleasure and pain, they are not fitted to form a basis on which to erect an edifice of objective doctrine. The content of such judgments has no existence whatever outside our feelings. Religious knowledge, therefore, so far as it takes the form of value-judgments, has no object whatever but the determinations, the feelings, the emotions of the religious mind. Outside and beyond our religious knowledge lies an inaccessible objective reality to which our religious consciousness relates,—a mystery destined to remain for ever unintelligible and uncomprehended, which can never become a datum either of perception or of knowledge. The qualities we try to predicate of it remain outside of it; they do not really belong to it; they are merely our ways of regarding it. Religious doctrines, Church dogmas in particular, must be regarded not as objective statements, but as reflexes of the religious consciousness; which latter presupposes, indeed, the existence of an objective reality,—a reality, however, which remains and always will remain beyond our reach.

In this connection we can appeal to Lotze. He was logical enough not to delude himself regarding the consequences for religious knowledge, if it be once conceded that it consists

<sup>1</sup> *Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, vol. iii. p. 22.

solely of value-judgments. He, too, looks upon religious knowledge in the same light; especially did he thus treat the designation of Christ as the Son of God. In his view there is no real reason for denying that God, at single moments and in individual persons, has been nearer than usual to humanity, and has revealed Himself to such men more specifically than to others; he also considers it right to treat the relation in which the founder of our religion stood to God as thoroughly unique, not merely in degree, but in kind—in essential character. No one, however, he maintains, can find words adequate to express and formulate what this relation was. "Inasmuch as Christ *cannot* be the Son of God in the strict and *proper* sense of the term—as must be allowed; and as no authentic interpretation can be given of the true meaning of this figurative expression, the proposition is not one that is fit for use in the formation of a *theoretical* dogma. Whoso then affirms it, simply expresses his conviction of the unique value Christ is to him, the unique value Christ's relation to God has for humanity, without being able to define either."<sup>1</sup> "He who naively allows the teachings and life—the lived life, not merely the story thereof—of Christ to exert their natural influence on his soul, without attempting to analyse the impression, will arrive at the conviction that he is in the presence of a work of infinite and unique value for the redemption of humanity. But attempts to form a theory of the content and value of this work, to put them on a scientific basis, are without exception destined to failure."<sup>2</sup> According to Lotze, therefore, a religious value-judgment tells us nothing about the objective nature of the thing to which it relates. That is and remains a mystery. One may feel it or have dim inklings of it; one may try to set it forth in images or figures; but to find an expression which shall be adequate and theoretically valid is impossible. Hence his demand for the "recognition of divine mysteries;"

<sup>1</sup> Lotze, *Grundzüge der Religionsphilosophie*, § 98.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* § 99.

while he at the same time insists that "individual believers shall be left to put their own interpretation on the mysteries."<sup>1</sup> "Church dogmas, taken as they stand, are not at all fit to be the constituents of a confession or non-confession. Before they can be thus used, the actual meaning lying behind or wrapped up in their imperfect figurative and symbolical language would in each case need to be ascertained. No such interpretation, however, can be objectively given. Each individual man is compelled to arrive at it by his own effort."<sup>2</sup>

Ritschl's principles lead to the same conclusions. If religious knowledge consists of value-judgments, it lacks objectivity; it is unfit, therefore, to become the content of objective dogmas; it can claim no significance beyond that of a *figurative expression for the unknowable and unutterable*.

Just at this point Ritschl's theology clasps hands, so to speak, with ideas which are at the present moment widely current in circles that can by no means be characterized as irreligious. Many of our contemporaries who wish to be religious in their own individual way, nevertheless regard all statements of a positive kind on religious matters with scepticism. The specific substance of the Christian religion in particular seems to them a mystery, to which their soul maintains a guarded attitude, is recognised as such with a sort of holy awe; but they treat dogmas and theological investigations as all but impotent attempts to conceive what is inconceivable and name what is unnameable. Nor ought one to be surprised at the frequency with which religious minds fall into a mood of this kind. What is it after all but the natural result, the precipitate, so to speak, of a long continued negative occupation with the teaching of Scripture and the Church? It has been so long critically pulled to pieces and reconstructed, that one has at last to confess

<sup>1</sup> Lotze, *Grundzüge der Religionsphilosophie*, § 101.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* § 95.



inability to say what its true and proper substance is: in fact, one would be as puzzled to define it as to determine the nature of the Kantian "thing-in-itself."

That such views and such a state of mind cannot promote the cause of religion, must be clear enough. How can that as to whose real nature we are completely ignorant permanently maintain its sway over the heart, still less control volition? Nay more, how can we keep hold of our conviction that it exists at all? It might indeed for a time dimly assert its reality in the inklings and feelings of the soul; but thus isolated from the rest of the being and life of humanity, and exercising no influence thereon, it would ere long be driven even from this twilight region. For whatever ceases to stand in any relation to knowledge, will speedily pass beyond the possibility of being felt.<sup>1</sup>

The separation of religious truth from science is proclaimed in the name of religion, with the idea of rendering it a service, and of securing its essence against the assaults of the mere understanding. The result of such a policy is to exhibit religion as closely allied to an obscurantism which dreads the light, and thus its would-be advocates join hands with the most dangerous form of illuminism — an illuminism the necessary goal of which is to separate man from God, and which declares war, not only against all higher knowledge, but also against every form of vital religiosity. The outcome is a species of religion which, instead of knitting closer the bond between man and God, loosens it; in a word, a religion which is the caricature of religion.

To continue the work of theological science under conditions like these would clearly be impossible. If the object of the Christian faith is an absolutely unknowable mystery, theology is an essential absurdity.

<sup>1</sup> See Note 63 in Appendix.

§ 65. *Herrmann's idea of a twofold reality untenable.*

Professor Herrmann has endeavoured to secure the position of the objects of the Christian faith by the hypothesis of a twofold reality; but such a hypothesis is completely untenable. What he does is to assign the religious view of the world to the domain of man's personal life, which, as he tells us, "though shut out from the conceptions of pure scientific knowledge, has at its disposal ideas or representations peculiar to itself, for the expression of its own reality."<sup>1</sup> We, however, have seen that if religious knowledge consists solely of value-judgments, as Herrmann also takes for granted, it has no reality at all for its object. Still further, the idea advanced of two kinds of reality is a self-contradictory one. What can that be which is at one and the same time real, and yet opposed to that which is really existent? The real has only one kind of antithesis, namely, the not-real. To separate religious knowledge from the knowledge of the real and existent, is to deny the reality of the objects of religious knowledge.<sup>2</sup>

If religious knowledge consists of value-judgments, it cannot have objective reality for its content. It does indeed presuppose objective reality of some kind or other; but whatever it is, it can never be known; it remains an unknown X, the *unknown thing-in-itself of religious truth*.

But we cannot even halt here. Ritschl pronounced the thing-in-itself a mere abstraction, and therefore denied its real existence. We have no right, therefore, to ascribe real existence to the unknown mystery which remains after the complete dissolution of the objective truth of religious knowledge has been effected. This very mystery has no existence outside the religious consciousness:—it, too, must be pro-

<sup>1</sup> W. Herrmann, *Die Religion im Verhältniss zum Welterkennen und zur Sittlichkeit*, p. 100.

<sup>2</sup> See Note 64 in Appendix.

nounced a mere relation of the religious consciousness to itself.

The final step necessitated by the separation of religious from theoretical or scientific knowledge is thus taken. Separate the former from the latter, and it issues, not in dim inklings of the incomprehensible, but in the conviction that religion is as such and essentially void of object, and that no line of demarcation can be drawn between religion and religious delusion. To understand religion is then to see that all religion is illusion; and the only religious progress possible would be to purge the human mind entirely of religion.

The separation of religious from theoretical knowledge lands us accordingly in the same conclusion as that in which the limitation of knowledge to the phenomenal landed us, namely, *religious nihilism*. Ritschl's theory of cognition involves in the last resort the resolution of the objects of knowledge into unreal seeming. This same theory, with the two methodological principles deduced from it, namely, the limitation of knowledge to phenomena, and the separation of religious from theoretical knowledge, applied to theology leads logically to the dissolution of theology and religion alike into illusion and phantasmagoria.

An answer has thus been given to the question previously raised, whether the mode in which Ritschl's theory of cognition admits of Christianity becoming matter of knowledge, can be harmonized with the essence of Christianity.

The result to which our criticism of Ritschl's theology leads us, therefore, is purely negative. We have been told indeed that one of its services has been to break the yoke which hitherto bound philosophy and theology together, to free theology from the chains which its union with philosophy had cast around it, and to bid it go forth free and independent. The effect of this deliverance, however, is to make theology more dependent than ever on philosophical assumptions; nay

more, on assumptions which, were they valid, would involve the abolition alike of theology and religion. What pretends to be a separation, proves to be a deathly embrace.

With regard to the substance of this theology we are no longer left in doubt. Whilst assuring us that he is merely bringing a different method of cognition into application, Ritschl reduces the Christian religion to a few fundamental truths, between which and the general religious principles which constituted the substance of rationalism there is little difference. He makes many attempts to transcend rationalism, but they are all failures. In point of fact, his system of theology is an attempt to revive in new form the antiquated principles of rationalism, and to establish them on a new basis by means of a theory of cognition suggested by Kant and Lotze, and with the help of elements drawn from Schleiermacher. To this extent it is by no means a thing *sui generis*, but, in spite of the protests raised by Ritschl's disciples, must be classed with other modern forms of rationalism. It is simply a reconstructed theology of the so-called faith of reason or rational faith (*Vernunftglaube*), and differs from other attempts of the same kind, not so much in substance as in form and method.<sup>1</sup> But even this new attempt to bring down the Christian religion to the level of rationalism issues in a result the very opposite of that which is aimed at, namely, in a fresh *self-disintegration of rationalism*—one, too, of a far more radical character than any that had preceded it. The epistemological principles on which it rests, instead of providing a new foundation for the religious doctrines which the old rationalism had left untouched, actually undermines and overthrows them. The method of determining the objects of religious knowledge which our author applies, when logically carried out, involves their dissolution and transformation into subjective determinations or phases of thought. Were the principles of his system to attain to universal recognition,

<sup>1</sup> See Note 65 in Appendix.

they would initiate the complete destruction of theology as a science no longer in possession of any subject-matter. That it should be lauded as a scientific performance of pioneering significance, and greeted as the dawn of a new epoch, can only be regarded as a melancholy symptom of decay.

The very doctrine of the origin and essential nature of religion laid down by this theology betrays its fundamentally naturalistic character. If man arrived at the possession of religion in the course of natural development, why should not the entire religious history of humanity, including also the rise of Christianity, be accounted for in the same way? Supposing religion to be essentially a product of the human mind, why should what is called the religion of revelation be deemed an exception? But if justice is not done to the revealed character of the Christian religion, and yet this same character is asserted and emphasized, such assertion and emphasis may easily take a predominantly negative turn; for it may be interpreted as implying that religious knowledge is altogether restricted to the phenomenal, that beyond the phenomenal we can have no knowledge of God, and that an immediate relation to God is an impossibility. When the Christian religion is thus said to rest on revelation, that is only another way of saying that religious knowledge is restricted to the phenomenal, with the result that its transcendent factors are partly thrust into the background, partly set aside altogether. How would Ritschl's theology look if its few leading ideas were to be first stripped of their traditional Church garb, then developed solely from themselves, and finally presented in a form adequate to their true nature? Principles that are essentially naturalistic have allied themselves with scriptural and Church doctrines on the one hand, and with a Neo-Kantian theory of cognition on the other. Such are the factors out of which Ritschl's theology is constituted; and it must accordingly be pronounced an artificial,

self-contradictory synthesis of heterogeneous elements, a precipitate of totally different intellectual tendencies, a commingling of streams from disparate sources, the union of which is merely apparent and outward, not inward and rational. Disparate elements are compounded into a unity which has no objective existence—which exists solely as a self-delusion of its author and of the numerous disciples who have reproduced it for themselves. The artificial character of the point of view is amply reflected in the involved style, in the frequent turnings aside from the line of thought commenced, and in the uncertain, hesitating mode of exposition. At the same time, the harsh polemical tone which would seem designed to silence criticism beforehand by its very violence, betrays a sense of insecurity with regard to the position taken up, which may well exist even along with growing success and manifold concurrence, and in the absence of a distinct consciousness thereof on the author's part.

After all, Ritschl's theology is itself an attempt at the synthesis of elements which he dreamed of for ever separating. By its very construction, therefore, he has directly raised the question whether the things which it is his aim to keep rigidly apart are not rather connected by inner necessity—so conjoined that they cannot be dissociated. His synthesis, however, is one that instead of conciliating, intensifies the antagonism, instead of bridging over, widens the yawning gulf. It is very unlikely that the exaggerated view taken at the present moment of the value of this theology will long maintain its ground. Philosophical inquiry, on the one hand, will refuse to put up with the half-hearted, confused, illogical application of Neo-Kantian epistemological principles; whilst, on the other hand, any theology based on the faith of the Church will feel that the application of such a theory of cognition, instead of preserving the substance of Christianity unchanged, really involves its disintegration. What we have aimed to expose is the inner inconsistencies



of Ritschl's theological system. These inconsistencies will inevitably bring about its overthrow.

It would be wrong to underestimate the intellectual force which characterizes Ritschl's theological work. We, on the contrary, recognise it to the full; but the path he has attempted to pursue is impassable. Would that he might see his way to renounce the false assumptions on which he bases his theology, and then advance to truly positive statements which he could weld into a compact and self-consistent whole!<sup>1</sup>

## CHAPTER IV.

### POSITIVE CONCLUSIONS.

We have thus reached a purely negative result. This negative result, however, involves an element of positive knowledge; and our aim will now be to develope and expound this positive outcome of our critical procedure, which we shall do in the briefest possible terms.

#### § 66. *Idealistic speculation and empiricism lead to the same goal.*

1. *Metaphysics* is a term which in these days has an evil sound. The prevalent *Zeitgeist* turns away from metaphysical inquiries with a sort of loathing: its face is set in a totally different direction. The theology of the Church, too, has come under the influence of the general tendency. The cry is for the empirical, the historical, facts. There one feels as though one had solid ground beneath one's feet: metaphysical inquiries, on the contrary, are thrust aside as of problematical worth; people shrug their shoulders sceptically at them, and desire that theology should keep clear of them. A purely

<sup>1</sup> [Since these words were penned Ritschl has passed to the sphere where he will no longer "see as in a glass darkly, but face to face."—TR.]

historical form—they say—is alone suited to the true genius of theology.

So matters stood. Accordingly, the cry is now raised, "Out, then, with metaphysics from the sphere of theology." Yet this cry falls on very sensitive ears, and excites a certain recoil. Rightly enough, too; for the pioneers of the historical movement did not exactly mean to go so far. On closer acquaintance it becomes apparent that to surrender metaphysics is to lose one's hold on the very historical positions which give value to Church theology. What is to become of theology if an endeavour be seriously made to expel metaphysics entirely from its domain?<sup>1</sup> The conception of God will then be reduced to the single element,—God is the will to produce that which has attained actuality in the world. The religious significance of Christ is limited to His historical human life. Eternal life, as the redemption brought by the kingdom of God, is identical with Christian freedom, or with the spiritual sway wielded in the present life over the world.<sup>2</sup> All that then remains to theology is an empiricism which is eager thoroughly to purge out every trace of the transcendent.<sup>3</sup> But it is also an empiricism which lets slip the religious positions which it meant to maintain, and transforms them into mere subjective conceptions.

The strength of Church theology in its revived form lay in the fact that it was built upon solid historical foundations—the foundations of the Christian revelation and Christian experience. It placed itself thus in opposition to mere speculation, which had only too manifestly tended to change the specific substance of the Christian faith and evaporate it into ideas. In its new phase the Church theology betook itself, on the contrary, to the safe, solid path of facts of experience. This was a great gain—a gain never again to be sacrificed.

<sup>1</sup> See Note 66 in Appendix.

<sup>2</sup> Ritschl, *Unterricht in der christlichen Religion*, 2nd ed. § 45.

<sup>3</sup> See Note 67 in Appendix.

But now it begins to be seen that experience, too, if one-sidedly and exclusively pressed, leads as surely to the dissolution of theology and Christianity as idealistic speculation. One-sided empiricism lands us in the same result as un-historical idealism. Idealistic speculation and exclusive empiricism are but different paths to the same negative goal.

This historical experience will not be lost on the Church theology; and the sting inflicted on it by the demand for the total expulsion of metaphysics can scarcely fail to prove a healthy warning.

The nature of the task now devolving on Church theology must also be clear enough. There can be no doubt that the historical tendency in recent theology has been marked by a certain one-sidedness;<sup>1</sup> it has obvious defects. This very one-sidedness has become the *constitutive principle* of Ritschl's theology. His theology is the outcome of an effort to carry the principle to its logical issues. By giving it systematic and relatively self-consistent development, the true nature of the principle has been brought to light;—all the clearer is now the necessity for its rejection.

The next business of theologians, therefore, is to overcome and cast aside this one-sided, inadequate moment. Firm hold must be kept on the historical foundations on which the edifice of Church theology rests; full justice must be done, however, on the other hand, to the metaphysical elements which the Christian religion as such involves, and which it cannot give up without committing suicide. Their essential importance to Christian theology must be recognised, and they must be more amply developed, if the very historical bases referred to are not to be exposed to the risk of being undermined and overthrown.

Theology finds itself therefore face to face with problems which are no longer merely historical. The Christian consciousness has indeed a certitude of its own, which is

<sup>1</sup> See Note 68 in Appendix.

completely independent of metaphysical investigation and philosophical knowledge. Other considerations, however, force themselves on notice when it becomes a question of the scientific justification of simple Christian faith. Ranke the historian has directed attention to the significant fact, that when the ancient philosophies ceased to be studied, the great Christian theologians, the Fathers of the Church, disappeared; the extinction of Greek philosophy was followed by the stagnation of original developments in Christian theology.<sup>1</sup> The application is obvious. The extraordinary diffusion of Ritschl's theology is one of the best indications of the nature of the fruit which results from the neglect of philosophical inquiry. And there is reason for fearing a retrogression of scientific thought in relation to the fundamental principles of theology, which cannot but exert a detrimental influence on all its branches.

If the theology of the Church is to be in a position again to do full justice to the metaphysical momenta of the Christian faith, the elements of a Christian gnosis which it contains, it must discover not merely a *modus vivendi*, but also a more intimate *modus co-operandi*, with philosophical research; it must leave the merely historical point of view behind, and go on to take a historico-speculative view of Christianity.

Ritschl's school will turn out to have been the inauguration of a serious crisis in the history of theology. The rise of Christian theology in the early ages of the Church was due to the application of the scientific instruments provided by heathen philosophy to the subject-matter of faith. A link was thus forged which has lasted down to the present day. Now, however, certain incongruities which mark the alliance have disclosed themselves; and so far the objections raised to philosophy in theology by the school of Ritschl are well founded. Their only conception of a remedy is—a radical break between the two. But that the removal of the diffi-

<sup>1</sup> Leopold von Ranke, *Weltgeschichte*, Theil iv. Abtheilung ii. p. 21.

culty is not to be found in this direction we have shown well-nigh *ad nauseam*. Nor will relief be secured by simply falling back on historical positions,—no; the real question is, What positive principles of its own can Church theology offer as substitutes for the ideas derived from heathenism to which thinkers have hitherto gone for support? Its business will accordingly be to institute, on the one hand, a profounder examination into its own contents—the contents of Scripture and the faith of the Church; and, on the other, to utilize to the full the truth of which humanity has a natural knowledge; and thus to bring to light the necessary metaphysical presuppositions of the Christian religion, and to present them in more adequate form. To the accomplishment of this task it is clear something more than a merely propædeutical, or even merely negative occupation with philosophical inquiries will be necessary.

§ 67. *Theology must break with the Kantian epistemology.*

2. With this is connected another point. If metaphysics are again to hold the place of honour in theology which is their due, the *errors of the Kantian theory of cognition* must be consciously and openly renounced.

It has sometimes been maintained that the Kantian philosophy is favourable to the Christian religion, inasmuch as it asserts that the human mind is incapable of knowing the supersensuous. The unknown X of the Kantian theory of cognition, the thing-in-itself, it was thought, marks the very region in which faith can feel most truly at home. Efforts were made to locate the "Heaven of Faith" in the gap which Kant was obliged to leave. We have endeavoured in the first section of this work to show how little ground there is for such a notion. If religious truth is a "thing-in-itself," in Kant's sense, it is and remains unknowable; and there is no such thing as objectively valid Christian doctrine. And

not only is religious truth unknowable, but the objects to which religious doctrine relates have in that case no objective reality; for the "thing-in-itself" is not the real kernel wrapped up in the phenomenon, as in a husk,—no; it is a mere limitative conception, marking the boundary beyond which we cannot pass. One can therefore scarcely blame David Strauss for pouring bitter scorn on attempts thus to combine contradictory elements.<sup>1</sup> "The Kantian philosophy my soul hateth," said a Würtemberg theologian,<sup>2</sup> whose faith was of a decidedly Biblical type; and in thus expressing himself he was certainly guided by a truer instinct than were those who fancied that Christian faith and Kantian philosophy could be united into one harmonious whole. Our business, however, is not to hate the Kantian philosophy. The Spinozistic principle: "It is not men's business to love or hate things, but to understand them," may indeed be false; yet it is none the less every one's duty to be just even to error. The Critical Philosophy is a great and unique thing; and, despite its errors, it must be allowed to have been a relatively necessary stage in the development of the modern mind, to have constituted a decisive crisis in the history of thought; and, as such, it undoubtedly possesses a high positive significance.

But it is not the relative truth of the Critical Philosophy that we have once more to acknowledge and exhibit; we are concerned now with its errors,—errors from which theology ought to hold itself aloof. Kant's abstract separation of the thing-in-itself from the thing as it is for us or from phenomenon, must not be introduced into theology. What the results would be we have already seen. Not even to the relation between God's revelation of Himself and what God

<sup>1</sup> D. Fr. Strauss, *Ein Nachwort als Vorwort zu den neuen Auflagen meiner Schrift. Der alte und der neue Glaube*, 1873, p. 21.

<sup>2</sup> See Ehmann's *Karl Fr. Hartmann, ein Charakterbild aus der Geschichte des christlichen Lebens in Süddeutschland*, Tübingen 1861, p. 180.



is in and by Himself should the distinction be applied. An example will clearly show the danger it involves. God is *triune*; this signifies, we are told, that God has revealed Himself in three persons. Undoubtedly! Utterance is thus given to an historical fact. But the meaning of the doctrine of the Trinity goes beyond that. Or when we call God the Triune, do we merely mean that He has revealed Himself in three persons? Is that actually the full sense? Were it so, that which is designated the divine Trinity would belong exclusively to history. The concession, indeed, is made that the historical self-distinction in which God manifests Himself points back to a distinction in God Himself; but the real nature of this inner divine relation did not come out in the historical revelation—it remains an unknown X. Now this is just the Kantian distinction between thing-in-itself and phenomenon over again. We stand in the presence of a phenomenon about which we are certain that it points back to a thing-in-itself, but what the thing-in-itself is remains absolutely unknowable. What becomes of the phenomenal when no essence, no thing-in-itself presents itself therein, we have seen already. If history be once divorced from metaphysics, manifestation from the subject manifesting itself, phenomenon from essence, historical revelation will lose its value, and we shall be threatened with a new kind of Sabellianism—a Sabellianism which represents the three persons of the Trinity—Father, Son, and Spirit—as forms under which the one God, who in Himself is neither Father, Son, nor Spirit, has manifested Himself.

We ought rather to recognise it as our task to show that the God who reveals Himself in history as the Triune, is also triune in and of Himself.<sup>1</sup> This exclusively historical method—this separation of the historical revelation from the essential being of God—is quite as fitted to lead astray as the attempt to construct the triune nature of God independently of His

<sup>1</sup> See Note 69 in Appendix.

historical revelation. Unity in distinction and distinction in unity is, and will ever remain, the universal form of the knowledge of truth.

But the historical revelation is also an effect to be traced back to the essential nature of God—God as He is in Himself—as its cause. Following in Kant's footsteps, Schleiermacher forbade any transcendent application of the law of causality. For this reason alone, if for no other, he was compelled to deny the possibility of a valid inference from a manifestation or mode of action of God to His proper nature. A similar view has been advocated by recent Church theologians. The Trinity, for example, has been treated as a historical relation which presupposes analogical self-distinctions in the immanent and eternal being of God; but those who concede this teach at the same time that the relation thus underlying the historical revelation of the triune can never be known by us, and that no conclusion can be drawn from the one to the other.

Such a view, however, involves epistemological principles whose consequences are perilously far-reaching. If no conclusion can be drawn from the effect to the nature of the cause, if the latter cannot be known by means of the former, a historical revelation is not the manifestation of a nature lying behind it. A revelation that does not manifest the nature of the revealer is an unreal revelation; an unreal revelation is no revelation at all. The principle we are considering endangers the very objectivity and historical truth of revelation which those who advocate it are anxious to preserve.

In the abstract contrast thus drawn between the essential nature of God and His historical self-manifestation in the world, traces of the influence of Schleiermacher may be discovered. As is known, he assigned to theology the task of describing pious states to the exclusion of divine manifestations; now it is the objective facts of redemption that are assigned for its domain. But a contradiction is assumed to exist between the historical manifestation of God and His

essential being similar to that which Schleiermacher posited between God as He is in Himself and His self-manifestation in the pious consciousness. The influence here attributed to Schleiermacher, however, is one that he exerted in consequence of his having himself been determined by Kant.

3. Schleiermacher's influence may also be detected in another direction. A great point with him was the originality of the religious relation. To have established this is his abiding merit. He pointed out that religion is a special province of the human mind, and ought to be recognised as such. But as Kant conceived of the practical reason as a separate domain alongside of the theoretical, which is the other half, so to speak, of the reason; so Schleiermacher treated religion as a single province alongside of others. This view of the relation between religion and reason has exercised an influence also on the mode in which the Church theology has conceived the relation of religion to other aspects of human life. Some, in fact, have gone so far as to characterize religion as a *single side* of human life. The domain of religion may be so isolated and individualized, that there shall remain but a single step to the position, that religious knowledge should be separated from world-knowledge or science; that the two modes of knowledge are, in fact, opposed. We have seen what are the consequences of such an assertion. The great task of theology is to establish the very reverse, namely, that religion is of central and universal significance. It is not merely a single domain, or a single function, of the life of the human spirit alongside of others; on the contrary, it is its very centre. As such, too, it must be treated.

Age after age the Church has sought by means of its theology not only to confute the errors which arrayed themselves against it, but to vanquish them, in a positive sense, bringing to light and quickening the truth which lay behind them. All that criticism can accomplish is to direct attention to defects, and to define the tasks which the present juncture imposes.

## APPENDIX.

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NOTE 1, page 2.—Wellhausen narrates that he was in a state of very uncomfortable perplexity with regard to the relation of the prophetical and historical books to the Law, till Ritschl called his attention to Graf's hypothesis, that the Law should be placed after the Prophets. See his *Prolegomena zur Geschichte Israels. Geschichte Israels*, 2te Ausg. Bd. i. Berlin 1883, p. 4.

NOTE 2, page 2.—The following theologians have written more or less fully against Ritschl:—

Frank in the *Zeitschrift für Protestantismus und Kirche*, Jahrg. 1871, 1874, 1876; further in the *System der christlichen Wahrheit*; in the *System der christlichen Gewissheit* (translated); in the preface to the *System der christlichen Sittlichkeit*, and towards the close of the second half of the last work.

Luthardt in his *Kompendium der Dogmatik*, repeatedly in the *Allgemeine evangelisch-lutherische Kirchenzeitung*, and in the *Zeitschrift für kirchliche Wissenschaft und kirchliches Leben*, Jahrg. 1881, Heft xii., and elsewhere.

J. A. Dorner, *Christliche Glaubenslehre*, Bd. i. and ii. (translated).

Hermann Schmidt in *Theologische Studien und Kritiken*, Jahrg. 1873 and 1876; in several articles in the *Zeitschrift für kirchliche Wissenschaft und kirchliches Leben*; as also in reviews in the *Theologisches Literaturblatt*, and in his work *Die Kirche. Ihre biblische Idee und die Formen ihrer geschichtlichen Erscheinung in ihrem Unter-*

*schiede von Sekte und Härese. Eine dogmatische und dogmengeschichtliche Studie*, Leipzig 1884.

Kreibig und Herrmann Schmidt, *Versöhnung und Rechtfertigung*, 1882.

Bestmann, *Die theologische Wissenschaft und die Ritschl'sche Schule*, Nördlingen 1881.

H. Weiss, "Ueber das Wesen des persönlichen Christenstandes, eine kritische Orientirung mit Beziehung auf Ritschl's Theologie," in *Studien und Kritiken*, Jahrg. 1881, p. 377 ff.

R. Kübel, *Ueber den Unterschied zwischen der positiven und der liberalen Richtung in der modernen Theologie*, Nördlingen 1881.

Dieckhoff, *Die Menschwerdung des Sohnes Gottes*, Leipzig 1882.

F. L. Steinmeyer, *Die Geschichte der Passion des Herrn*, zweite neu bearbeitete Auflage, Berlin 1882, pp. 240 f., 210 (translated).

Fricke, *Metaphysik und Dogmatik in ihrem gegenseitigen Verhältnisse*, Leipzig 1882.

Heer, *Der Religionsbegriff Albrecht Ritschl's*, Zürich 1884.

Grau, *Ueber die Gottheit Christi und die Versöhnung durch sein Blut*, Greifswald 1884.

Haug, *Darstellung und Beurtheilung der A. Ritschl'schen Theologie*, Ludwigsburg 1885.

Otto Pfleiderer, from his point of view, has expressed his dissent from Ritschl in his *Religionsphilosophie*. Cf. Aufl. 2, p. 192 ff.; Aufl. 1, Bd. i. Abschn. 4, cap. 2.

The following writers are more or less on Ritschl's side:—

W. Herrmann, *Die Metaphysik in der Theologie*, 1876. *Die Religion im Verhältniss zum Welterkennen und zur Sittlichkeit*, 1879. *Der Verkehr des Christen mit Gott im Anschluss an Luther dargestellt*, 1886. *Die Gewissheit des Glaubens und die Freiheit der Theologie*, 1887.

H. Schultz, *Lehre von der Gottheit Christi*, 1881.

J. Kaftan, *Das Wesen der christlichen Religion*, 2nd ed. 1888.

Thikötter, *Darstellung und Beurtheilung der A. Ritschl'schen Theologie*, 1883.

A. Harnack, *Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte*, Bd. i. Buch 2, H. 1.

As in close rapport with Ritschl's school, though not without mutual opposition, may be mentioned :—

R. Lipsius. On the points as to which he diverges from Ritschl, see his *Lehrbuch der evangelisch-protestantischen Dogmatik* (2nd ed. Braunschweig 1879); his *Dogmatische Beiträge* (Leipzig 1878); and his *Philosophie und Religion. Neue Beiträge zur wissenschaftl. Grundlegung der Dogmatik*, Leipzig 1885.

G. Chr. Bernhard Pünjer, a former pupil of Lipsius, took sides against Ritschl and Herrmann. See his *Grundriss der Religionsphilosophie*, Braunschweig 1886, p. 56 ff.; as also his *Geschichte der christlichen Religionsphilosophie seit der Reformation*, 1883, Bd. ii. p. 340 ff. (translated).

The above list lays no claim to be a complete enumeration of all the works bearing upon Ritschl's theology that have been published since it came into prominence.

NOTE 3, page 8.—Paulsen, in his *Versuch einer Entwicklungsgeschichte der Kantischen Erkenntnistheorie*, Leipz. 1875, p. 150, describes this letter as the best introduction to the historical understanding of the *Critique of Pure Reason*.

NOTE 4, page 8.—“Durch die Sinnlichkeit werden uns Gegenstände gegeben, durch den Verstand werden sie gedacht.” These words no doubt truly represent Kant's position in the first portion of the *Critique* (the Transcendental Æsthetic), which corresponds to that of the ordinary logic, and views the object as *given* to sense in the totality of its parts and qualities in the act of perception, and then by subsequent mental processes generalized and thought under a concept.



But from this standpoint Kant silently passes when he reaches the analytic to one that is very different, and which admits only a "formless manifold" as given in sense; that manifold being then laid hold of and *formed* into a definite object by the original forms of conception indwelling in the understanding. Thus, so far from the object being given ready-made to sense, it is only itself constituted through the understanding; and the concept is not derived by abstraction from the perceived object, but involved in that object itself. The latter view is the essentially Kantian one, although the former is apt from time to time to reappear. (See Professor Caird on the philosophy of Kant.)

"Die Formen des ausseren und des inneren Sinnes, d. h. der Raum und die Zeit."

With Kant, "time is the formal condition of all phenomena whatever (both internal and external). Space is a condition of external phenomena only" (*Kritik*, 1st ed. 34). By external phenomena, or phenomena of the outer sense, Kant seems primarily to have in view what belongs to the *external world* in the popular apprehension; and by internal phenomena, or phenomena of the inner sense, that which belongs to the world of thought or mental representation. But as his work proceeds, and the subjectivity of *all* phenomena becomes the prominent idea, this use of the terms is mingled with a different and incompatible one, according to which the inner sense and its form of time embraces all phenomena whatever, whether vulgarly classed as material or mental, while the outer sense and its form of space is appropriated to a particular portion of such phenomena, viz. those of extension, which exhibits the character of mutual externality of parts (*partes extra partes*), but irrespective of whether they be sense-perceptions or thought-images. Kant's view of "externality" is, however, beset throughout with incurable confusion and inconsistency.—G. B. K.

NOTE 5, page 10.—*Ænesidemus, Oder über die Fundamente der von dem Herrn Prof. Reinhold in Jena gelieferten Elementarphilosophie nebst einer Vertheidigung des Skepticismus gegen die Anmassungen der Vernunftkritik*, 1792, pp. 127 ff., and

294 ff. Dr. Gideon Spicker has drawn up a summary statement of the most striking of the objections urged by this acute sceptic, partly following Kuno Fischer's account of Kant, in his work, *Das Verhältniss der Naturwissenschaft zur Philosophie*, Berlin 1874, p. 70 ff.

NOTE 6, page 12.—“Folglich kann auch keines von beiden in seiner Isolirung, weder die sinnliche Anschauung als solche noch der Verstand mit seinen Kategorien, Gegenstand der Untersuchung werden.”

This is no doubt quite true, but it scarcely supports the charge of “contradiction.” Kant lays himself open to that charge by his habit of speaking of the understanding and the sense as if they were independent or materially separate elements. But his general analysis of the factors of knowledge does not depend on this. Whether separable or not, they are, in fact, only *known* in synthesis; and it is quite possible to distinguish in an indivisible synthesis elements both of which would immediately vanish if either be removed. The knowledge of an object, Kant would say, requires a union of matter of sense with *a priori* forms of intuition and conception. But the necessity of such a synthesis is quite consistent with a consciousness of its distinguishable elements.—G. B. K.

NOTE 7, page 17.—The criticism may here be raised, that this is only true where the copula *is*, is predicate as well as copula; as, for example, in the judgment, “the world is,” which affirms the independent and real existence of the world. In ordinary propositions, when *is* serves merely the function of copula, uniting the predicate with the subject, its significance is in no way affected by the question whether subject and predicate are alike to be regarded as metaphysically phenomenal or real. In the proposition, iron is hard, it discharges its function, whether the ideas “iron” and “hard” represent objective realities or merely subjective phenomena.—G. B. K.

NOTE 8, page 20.—Schopenhauer's words in a letter addressed to Rosenkranz, 24th August 1837. The principal

passage was introduced by the latter into the preface to the second part of the edition of Kant's complete works, which he edited in conjunction with Schubert (see p. 11 ff.). Schopenhauer wrote, "With the frivolity as well as timidity characteristic of old age, Kant in his later years actually retracted the views he had formed of the relation of the ideal and the real which he had embraced in the vigour of his understanding, and which he ever afterwards cherished. For very shame, however, he failed to confess that he deserted his system meanwhile—himself slipping out by a sort of back door." The misconceptions of the *Critique*, which Kant's successors, opponents, and adherents constantly cast in each other's teeth, and that probably with justice, were chiefly due to this mis-improvement (*Verschlimmbesserung*) of his work, which he himself had effected; for who can understand that which is compounded of contradictory elements? See Rosenkranz, *l.c.* p. 14; also Schopenhauer's *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*, Aug. 2, Bd. i., Leipz. 1844, p. 489.

NOTE 9, page 21.—"Also Kann das Ding an sich nicht nur nicht erkannt, sondern auch nicht gedacht werden. Folglich ist das Ding an sich das Undenkbare; was aber *undenkbar ist, kann auch nicht existiren*," p. 22.

Such is, no doubt, a rigorous deduction from the Kantian theory of knowledge. *Existence* applies to what can be determined in experience according to the category of affirmation or reality, and what possesses, therefore, a sensible content. This is that fully formed knowledge or *filled thought* which Kant assigns as the legitimate object of the speculative intellect. Nay, there are repeated passages which seem to limit all true thought to such knowledge: thus, "We cannot extend the field of the object of our thought beyond the conditions of our sensibility" (*Kritik*, 1st ed. p. 287).

But it must never be forgotten that, in spite of all this, and however apparently inconsistent with it, the admission of an outer region of being beyond the confines of experience, possible or problematical only to the speculative reason, but capable of independent justification as matter of belief, was a fundamental part of Kant's thought, of which he never lost

hold. Thus in a note inserted only in the second and following editions he says, "The categories are not limited for the purpose of *thought* by the conditions of our sensuous intuition, but have really an 'unlimited field;'" and then he goes on to distinguish such "thought" from knowledge proper. (In the *Dialectic* he even admits an *analogical* use of the categories for the transcendent ideas.) This corresponds with Hamilton's language about the domain of knowledge not being necessarily coextensive with the horizon of faith (*Discussions*, p. 15). The error of both these great thinkers seems to lie in their view that the completely determined knowledge of sensible intuition is the whole of real knowledge, and the consequent banishment into a sort of unacknowledged limbo of merely "negative thought," of that whole penumbra of vague and uncompleted knowledge into which all higher thinking runs. In a word, their categories needed extension.

While, then, Kant would probably have accepted the proposition, "was undenkbar ist kann auch nicht *existiren*," he would have wholly rejected this, "was vollständig denkbar nicht ist, kann auch nicht irgendwo *seyn*."—G. B. K.

NOTE 9a, page 32.—"Diese Vorstellung, da ich sie an keiner Realit te mehr messen kann, vermag ich vom bl ssen Tr umen nicht mehr zu unterscheiden. . . . Ist aber jede Gesetzm ssigkeit aus unserem Erkennen gewichen, *so ist es ein zuf lliges, willk rliches Spiel der Vorstellung geworden*," p. 26.

Our author has successfully proved that the outcome of the Kantian epistemology is a "Solipsism" which excludes all knowledge, either of other beings than myself, or of things independent of my consciousness. But this is not the same as a denial of all objective truth, unless by *objective* we mean *ontological*, which is not Kant's meaning. If I observe that the phenomena given in sensible intuition, though facts of my own consciousness only, are ordered according to general laws, and form a consistent system, which I may gradually come to understand, and thus be enabled to construct in thought a plan of that system which shall truly correspond to the order of intuition, and hence to guide my acts towards preconceived

ends, I am in possession of knowledge both real and valuable. Though I have no ontological standard, no norm of truth *in itself*, I have the order of intuition as a standard for the order of thought; therefore, a kind of objective truth which may justly be so described, though in a secondary and subordinate sense. Objective truth, so understood, would indeed consist, as Leibnitz himself suggested, in "*somnia bene ordinata*" (Erdmann, *Leibnitz*, p. 144); but this is very different from a mere "*Zufälliges willkürliches Spiel der Vorstellung*."—G. B. K.

NOTE 9b, page 32.—*Representation*. This is the usual English rendering of the German word *Vorstellung*, a term of wider generality than any which our philosophical vocabulary possesses. It includes every kind of distinguishable mental fact—perception, image, thought, feeling, etc. Consequently, the English word "representation," when used as its equivalent, must be freed from every suggestion of secondary manifestation, resemblance, copy, etc. It comprises what Sir W. Hamilton calls "presentations" as well as "representations;" both object-object and subject-object.—G. B. K.

NOTE 10, page 35.—The distinction set up by Kant between thing-in-itself and phenomenon is an abstraction. The concrete distinction is rather the unity of that which is in itself distinguished, and distinction in unity. Hegel justly observes, "The essence becomes apparent; hence the phenomenal (the apparent) is not an unsubstantial something, but a manifestation of the very essence" (*Wissenschaft der Logik*, Bd. ii. 1816, p. 23). A speculative mind like that of Franz von Baader, with his eye set on the unity of antitheses, could not but feel himself decidedly repelled by the prominence given to the abstract understanding in Kant's system (*Verständigkeit*). He denounces it as a fundamental error of the mode of thought of the Königsberg sage, that "whilst rightly enough distinguishing appearance from that which appears, he carried distinction to the point of separation,—not perceiving that phenomenon in this general sense, and in distinction from unsubstantial show and seeming, is really identical with a

revelation of the very being (the thing-in-itself), and that it is consequently a strange demand to make of this same thing-in-itself that it should communicate a knowledge of itself to us in some other way than the self-manifestation in question." See his *Philosophische Schriften und Aufsätze*, Bd. ii. p. 144.—Goethe, after his fashion, hit with sound tact the nail on the head when he remarked, "It is really useless to try to express the essence of a thing. We observe effects; and a complete history and survey of these effects might be expected to comprise the essence of the thing. It is vain to attempt to depict the character of a man; but if we set forth his acts, his conduct, an image of his character will impress itself on the mind." *Werke, Vollständige Ausgabe letzter Hand*, Bd. lii.; *Zur Farbenlehre*, p. ix. The essential nature can be known in the phenomenon, not apart from it; not directly, therefore, but indirectly. Phenomenon implies the existence of a being which, though not completely exhausted by the phenomenon, reveals itself to us in it.

The Apostle Paul says, "Now we see through a glass darkly" (1 Cor. xiii. 12). This applies to the supersensuous truth which is made known by the word of divine revelation. We have of it only an indirect, mirror-like knowledge. But this knowledge is knowledge which contains objective truth and is not merely subjective idea; for the things reflected in a mirror are actual things. This statement of the apostle's, therefore, gives us a significant hint towards a *Metacritique* of the *Critique of Pure Reason*. Compare what Hamann wrote on this subject to Lavater: "Here there is . . . a fulness, which is not merely, like the law, a shadow of good things to come, but gives αὐτὴν τὴν εἰκόνα τῶν πραγμάτων, so far as, being seen in a glass darkly, it is possible to make them present and perceptible; for that which is τέλειον lies beyond." Hamann's *Schriften*, herausgegeben von Friedr. Roth, Theil 5, p. 278.

It is an analogous case to that of seeing and knowing the sensuous world. Even if we do not perceive and know the actual things of which we speak immediately, but merely by means of images produced in our eyes, yet the objective truth of sense-perception and knowledge is not thereby abolished;



only such knowledge is not immediate, direct, but mediated by the picture on the retina. Sensuous perception "represents the object itself." See C. F. Heman, *Die Erscheinung der Dinge in der Wahrnehmung*, p. 169. Wundt attempts a critical rectification of sensuous experience in his *Idealrealismus. Grundzüge der physiol. Psychologie*, 1880, Bd. ii. p. 451 ff.

NOTE 11, page 44.—The argument of this paragraph needs perhaps a little elucidation. The true steps seem to me to be these. I am conscious of myself as the subject of perception, and of phenomena, or empirical objects of perception in synthesis with me—this synthesis constituting the indivisible content of consciousness. I am thus conscious of myself as *sciend*, and of *Erscheinungen* or phenomena as *sciende* too, without transcending consciousness, *i.e.* in a Fichtean sense; and if this were all, the author would be right in maintaining that real knowledge of independent truth is impossible. But it is not all; there is the original *belief* or *judgment* of real existence—existence independent of me—which I affirm in perception, *first*, of the objects as things perceived; and *then*, by a further step, of myself as a personality independent of them. In a word, I *first* put the *world* out of *me* by a judgment of its independent reality; and then by an immediate inference reach my *daseyn* or existence independent of it.

Lastly, I reach the being of God, because when I have placed the objective world out of me, it must have an independent subjectivity which is the absolute being God (subject and object mutually implying each other).—G. B. K.

NOTE 12, page 45.—The problem of *Innate ideas* may be solved from the same point of view. Ideas in the sense of complete conceptions of the reason are themselves acts or products of the reason; they cannot therefore be innate. But the intellect could not generate them out of itself unless they already potentially existed in it—existed in the form of germs capable of development. Understood thus, there is not merely a formal, *à priori* knowledge as maintained by Kant, but real knowledge—knowledge full of content. This must be

firmly maintained in opposition to every form of empiricism and sensualism. "If mind had not a content of its own, it could never comprehend a content outside itself; and if the content outside mind had not its own proper form, it could never be understood." (It is not our mind that bestows form on matter or stuff that is in itself formless, as Kant teaches.) "If there is such a thing as knowledge *à priori*, it cannot be merely formal; it must necessarily have a determinate content, and therefore be knowledge with a content. Were *à priori* knowledge merely formal, that is, void of content, and did knowledge secure its content solely by means of sensuous experience, the latter would be the chief factor, the kernel, the proper substance of all knowledge, and philosophy, resist as it might, must sink down to the level, first of empiricism, then of sensualism, and finally of materialism. For in that case there could be no knowledge but what comes to us through the senses and from the world of sense." So reasons against Kant, Franz Hoffmann the able editor of Baader's works. See Franz von Baader's *Sämmtliche Werke*, erste Hauptabth. Bd. i. Einleitung des Herausgebers, p. 42. This is, of course, a very different position from that of Benno Erdmann, that what Kant really aimed at in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, was to establish empiricism on a firm basis—a view which both Kuno Fischer and Paulsen have controverted. See *Altpreussische Monatschrift*, Bd. xx. p. 135.

NOTE 13, page 46.—On the untenableness of the sceptical distinction drawn in this case by Kant, see Franz Hoffmann's *Philosophische Schriften*, erster Band, Erlangen 1868, p. 460; compare Hegel, *Encyclopædie der philosophischen Wissenschaften*, p. 112, where the unfair application made by Kant of the really irrelevant, though to the ordinary mind apparently so pat example of the distinction between 100 conceived dollars and 100 real dollars is exposed. See, further, Hegel's *Wissenschaft der Logik*, Bd. i. p. 27 ff.

NOTE 14, pages 46, 48.—"Die Idee der absoluten Einheit und Wahrheit alles Seins ein an sich wahrer und nothwendiger Gedanke," p. 37.

“Die Kategorien auch auf das Uebersinnliche, auf die Objecte der transcendentalen Ideen sich beziehen,” p. 39.

These passages are not perhaps in themselves to be complained of, and dangerous interpretations of them (and several others) are guarded against by a good sentence on p. 28 (“Darin liegt noch nicht, dass das Wesen mit seiner Erscheinung, das Innere mit dem äusseren identisch, an dasselbe entäussert sei,” etc.), but still I will venture to put in an additional word of caution.

My own conviction is that the truth lies in the mean. If, on the one hand, Kant’s apparent agnosticism leads to the real agnosticism of Spencer, and the proscription of religion as the unknowable; so, on the other hand, the intolerable intellectual pride which accompanies the Hegelian gnosticism is equally unfavourable to true Christianity.

It seems to me that human thought, which as concerns the world of sensible experience is clearly determined and speculative (in the Kantian sense), becomes gradually fragmentary and incomplete as it ascends (thought of the *communio* of finite consciousnesses—of the relation of the soul to the body, etc.), and grows more and more symbolical and regulative as it approaches the highest reaches (the Absolute God and His relation to the finite creation and spirits); but it is an error to speak of *two kinds* of knowledge. The truth rather is, that the clearness of the lower gradually shades into the divine obscurity of the higher.

Surely Augustine hits the mark: “Quid est illud quod interlucet mihi, et perculit cor meum sine læsione, et inhorresco, et inardesco? Inhorresco, in quantum dissimilis ei sum, inardesco, in quantum similis ei sum,” *Conf.* xi. 9.—G. B. K.

On proofs of the existence of God, see Herrmann Ulrici’s *Gott und die Natur*, 1875, Abschnitt iii. and iv.; also Johannes Huber, *Der alte und der neue Glaube*, 1873, p. 31 f.

NOTE 15, page 47.—Fr. H. Jacobi was a noteworthy advocate of the existence of a rational sense or sensitivity, or organ through which man directly perceives the absolute. To him Schleiermacher confessed himself greatly indebted. The anthropomorphism which is necessarily involved in the

knowledge of God as the absolute ideal and archetype of humanity, Jacobi justifies by the epigram, "God theomorphised in creating man; man therefore necessarily anthropomorphises in thinking God." Jacobi, however, erred in denying that the knowledge of God thus immediately gained by the reason could be reduced to systematic form and scientifically developed. This denial of itself brought him into sharp conflict with Schelling. See Fr. H. Jacobi's *Von den göttlichen Dingen und ihrer Offenbarung* (Leipzig 1811); and Schelling's reply thereto in his *Denkmal der Schrift von den göttlichen Dingen*, etc., des Herrn F. H. Jacobi (Tübingen 1812); further, his *Einleitung in die Philosophie der Mythologie*, p. 280 f. Franz von Baader also took occasion to protest against Jacobi's poltroonery with regard to speculation; see his *Werke*, Bd. i. p. 78, erste Anmerkung, p. 90. The only outcome of the antagonism which Jacobi believed to exist between Head and Heart would be Rousseau's assertion, *que l'homme, qui commence à penser, cesse à sentir*.

For NOTE 16, see Errata.

NOTE 17, page 49.—In this connection it may be permitted to recall a remark made by Hegel in his *Logic*. The older metaphysics had a higher idea of thought than has been common of late. "It regarded thought and the determinations thereof, not as something foreign to the objects with which it was concerned, but rather as their very essence; in other words, that the things and the thinking of the things are in essential agreement; that thought in its immanent determination is of one and the same content with the true nature of things." See the *Wissenschaft der Logik*, Bd. i. 1812, *Einleitung*, p. v.

NOTE 18, page 52.—If this agreement is disturbed a reaction sets in, and this very reaction is the best proof of the objective persistence of the harmony of all that exists. Even through what is misshapen and perverse it asserts itself as its original and abiding law. Were this not the case, how could the perverse and misshapen be recognised as such?

NOTE 19, page 53.—If theoretical philosophy could be constructed without the recognition of a real absolute, if the domain of theoretical knowledge could be traversed without discovering traces and signs of an absolute, that would be the negation of the absolute. For the absolute cannot be what its name denotes without showing itself to be such in and through the theoretical thought of the human mind.

NOTE 20, page 60.—This parallelism between the claims of speculation and moral truth as transcendental is well and clearly put by J. Stuart Mill (of course from the opposite point of view to that of our author) in an essay in the *Dissertations and Discussions*, either that on Grote's *Plato* or on Bain's *Psychology*. He remarks that it is now seen that *το ον* and *το θεον* stand on the same basis—either both are absolute, or both merely relative.—G. B. K.

NOTE 21, page 64.—But Kant had, in more than one passage of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, made a similar reservation. Thus, in pp. 678–679, 1st ed., he admits an improper and analogical application of the categories (in a purely regulative sense) to the ideas of the speculative reason; while he forbears to hypostatize the first and third of these ideas solely for want of evidence (p. 673); and at p. 641 expressly holds out the prospect of such an actualization of the idea of God by an ethico-theology.

NOTE 22, page 71.—E. Pfeleiderer has the merit of holding up to present day empiricism a mirror in which it may see itself and its career reflected in the story of this historical development as set forth in *Empirismus und Skepsis in David Hume's Philosophie*, Berlin 1874. The writer's purpose is to summon up Hume to discharge once more his "historical office of alarum to waken his contemporaries out of their dogmatic, that is, in this case, their empirico-dogmatic, slumber. Historical experience shows, he considers, that Hume's bottomless scepticism is the true and final outcome of the tendency pursued by the present age; and as such he presents it as a salutary warning."

Also, in a note to § 27 of the *Transcendental Deduction of the Categories* (2nd ed.), he says, that for purposes of *thought* the categories are not limited by sensuous intuition, but have an unlimited field; they are only so limited for determined knowledge.

The fact appears to be, that there are in the *Critique* a negative and a positive vein of thought which cannot be logically reconciled. The negative which runs through the analytic is the more fully wrought out and consistently developed; and this Stählin takes to be the *true Kant*, showing that the more positive teaching of the *Practical Reason* is inconsistent therewith. But in interpreting Kant we ought to give both sides their due weight, and show them as contending forces in Kant's own mind which were never properly reconciled.

I am inclined to think that the necessary or invincible belief which Stählin (like Hamilton) invokes for the real existence of the external world—the ontological independence of the phenomena of perception—was actually assumed by Kant as belonging to the moral consciousness and its objects; that what he could not admit as to the perceptions of the theoretical reason, he did admit as to those of the practical. Such, too, seems to have been Hamilton's view. See his remarks on Kant in the first Dissertation to Reid *On Common Sense*, p. 792 f.—G. B. K.

NOTE 22, page 83.—On the philosophy of Kant, see (Molitor?) *Philosophie der Geschichte oder über die Tradition*, 1834 ff.; Windischmann, *Kritische Betrachtungen über die Schicksale der Philosophie in der neueren Zeit*, 1825; F. Harms, *Die Philosophie seit Kant*, 1876; Karl Phil. Fischer, *Grundzüge des Systems der Philosophie*, 1848 ff.; Gideon Spicker, *Kant, Hume, und Berkeley*, 1875.

NOTE 23, page 88.—Modern natural science has had much to do with the rise of Neo-Kantism. As early as the year 1866 Ueberweg remarked: "Akin in a certain sense to the Kantian criticism, although not based on Kant's apriorism and subjectivism, is the maxim which at present



dominates natural science, so far as it has kept itself aloof from materialism, that whatever lies beyond the limits of exact investigation is to be excluded from the sphere of scientific knowledge, and to be totally relegated to that of mere 'faith.' Rudolf Virchow, for example, refuses on principle to give testimony regarding anything that is not accessible to scientific knowledge, and concedes to faith the 'prerogative of being at every moment fixed and settled' (*semper eadem*) as compared with knowledge, which is rather fluent, always mobile, changing. See his *Vier Reden über Leben und Kranksein*, Berlin 1862." Ueberweg, *Grundriss der Geschichte der Philosophie*, Theil iii. 1866, 1st ed. p. 296 (translated).

NOTE 24, page 90.—In this connection a remark made by Ulrici may be worth attention: "Science," says he, "must preserve and guard itself against the mode in which the philosophy of this 'modern' period—as it likes to term itself—carries on scientific research. The critical discussions of individual points of controversy which are now so fashionable; the backward and forward reflections on separate problems, either without any proper or serious attempt at settlement, or a settlement which seems subjective and arbitrary, because it is effected on principles which are themselves of the same character,—this formal-scientific subjectivism inevitably leads to scepticism, if indeed it be not already scepticism." "And as certainly as inquiry, criticism, and doubt are necessary as a ferment of scientific research, so certainly is scepticism not a legitimate result thereof; it is, on the contrary, the product of a subjective spirit and temper which, when it gets at all the upper hand, is a sure sign that the impulse, feeling, and interest for science is beginning to wane." See his *Gott und die Natur*, Dritte neu bearbeitete Aufl., Leipzig 1875, p. xiv.

NOTE 25, page 91.—A conspectus of the modern Kant literature may be found in Vaihinger's *Commentar zu Kant's Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, Bd. i. 1881, p. 18; further, in Ueberweg's *Grundriss der Geschichte der Philosophie*, Theil iii. 6te Auflage bearbeitet und herausgegeben von Heinze, 1883,

p. 427 ff.; also Rabus, *Die neuesten Bestrebungen auf dem Gebiete der Logik bei den Deutschen und die logische Frage*, 1880, p. 75 ff.

NOTE 26, page 92.—On Lange's *Geschichte des Materialismus*, see Dr. Gideon Spicker's *Ueber das Verhältniss der Naturwissenschaft zur Philosophie*, 1874.

NOTE 27, page 117.—Helmholtz calls Lotze one of his forerunners, and gives him the credit of having thoroughly, methodically, and with distinctive acuteness criticized and cleared away rubbish out of the domain of general pathology, as it existed before his time. This he did in his work on *Allgemeine Pathologie und Therapie*, 1842. See Helmholtz's *Das Denken in der Medicin*, Berlin 1878, p. 5 f.

NOTE 28, pages 121, 122.—Spinoza, *i.e.*: "Per substantiam intelligo id, quod in se est. Per modum intelligo substantiæ affectiones sive id, quod in alio est."

When not otherwise noted, I quote from the first edition of Lotze's *Grundzüge der Religionsphilosophie*, which is a few pages larger than the later one.

NOTE 29, page 122.—Schelling was the originator of the personality-panteism, although he presented it in a different form and setting. See his *Philosophische Untersuchungen über das Wesen der menschlichen Freiheit und die damit zusammenhängenden Gegenstände*, 1809, included in his *Philosophische Schriften*, Bd. i., Landshut 1809, p. 397 ff. This may be regarded as Schelling's first attempt to free himself from his earlier pantheism; but he afterwards passed far beyond even this point of view.—On the impossibility of this personality-panteism, *i.e.* of the doctrine that God is a personal being and the universe at the same time His actuality or realization, see Franz Hoffmann, *Vorrede zu Franz von Baader's kleinen Schriften*, Leipzig 1850, p. cxxvii.: "If God is personality, the world cannot be His actuality or realization, because whilst a person may work and bring works into existence *ad extra*, he cannot have his own actuality outside

himself; and if the world is the actuality of God, God cannot be personality, because a personal being cannot be constituted by an infinitude of transient unconscious and conscious existences." See also Fr. Hoffmann, *Ueber den Persönlichkeits-Pantheismus als angebliche Versöhnung des Theismus und Pantheismus*, which Daumer propounded in his work, *Andeutung eines Systems spekulativer Philosophie*, 1831; Franz von Baader's *Werke*, Bd. ix. p. 81, Anmerkung.

NOTE 30, page 123.—Lotze, however, obviously contradicts himself when he teaches that though things are not substances, spirits (minds) are, because they are beings which exist for themselves, *Grundzüge der Religionsphilosophie*, Aufl. 1, p. 53. What kind of a substance can that be which is merely a modus of the all-one substance, in other words, not a substance at all? [Can we not, however, conceive of a hierarchy of substances, the lower being less absolute than the higher? Is not this Descartes' view?—"Substantia quæ nulla plane se indigeat unica tantum potest intelligi, neinpe Deus. Alias vero omnes non nisi ope concursus Dei existere posse perspicimus. Atqui ideo nomen substantiæ non convenit Deo et illis *univoce*, ut dici solet in scholis; hoc est, nulla ejus nominis significatio potest distincte intelligi, quæ Deo et creaturis sit communis."—*Principia Philosophiæ*, i. 51.—G. B. K.]

NOTE 31, page 123.—We leave Lotze's *Metaphysik*, published in 1841, out of consideration, noteworthy as it is for the light it throws on the course of its author's development, and refer solely to the *Metaphysik* published in 1879 (2nd edition in 1884), as being his ripest work, and to the *Grundzüge der Metaphysik*, published after his death—a small work embodying the paragraphs dictated to the students who attended his lectures.

NOTE 32, page 130.—Certainly a very peculiar idea of its kind. When we know, therefore, we are not concerned, as the common mind assumes, about the knowledge of anything. One scarcely knows whether or not to believe one's eyes

when one reads things of this kind; and one asks in amazement, "Is that really what is meant?" Yet this thought is but a necessary consequence of the premises from which Lotze starts. One is tempted to compare what Ritschl teaches as to the nature of the religious value-judgment; but we must not anticipate.

For NOTE 33, see Errata.

NOTE 34, page 156.—Compare as to this point Lotze's *Grundzüge der Religionsphilosophie*, especially chapter 9 on "Religion and Morality," and chapter 10 on "Dogmas and Confessions." There are three principles which, Lotze tells us, may be regarded as characteristic of every properly *religious* view of things as opposed to such as are proper to a merely *intellectual* or *scientific view of the world*. These are—

1. That the moral laws are the will of God.
2. That individual finite minds or souls are children of God, not mere products of nature.
3. That the actual be regarded not merely as the course of the world, but as a kingdom of God.

See 2nd edition, § 80. Lotze adds the remark, "More than the content of these three principles is not, as a matter of fact, revealed by the Christian revelation," § 84.

NOTE 35, page 156.—Like the Neo-Kantian philosophy, Lotze's system involuntarily supplies the proof that the salvation of philosophy is not to be found in turning aside from those great problems, the investigation of which has ever been regarded as its highest task, alike in ancient and modern times; that it must once more itself revindicate for itself the great subjects which constitute its peculiar domain; and that to this end very different methods from those proposed by Kant must be pursued if there be any future in reserve for this queen of the sciences.

NOTE 36, page 164.—Schleiermacher's *Dialektik*, which occupies in his system a position similar to that of the *Critique of Pure Reason* in the Kantian system, "copies" "the

results of Kant's theory of cognition, and plainly draws from the dualism between thing-in-itself and thought, which Kant on principle did not seek to transcend, but which was absolutely inconsistent with Schleiermacher's monistic tendency, the motive for his characteristic attempt to demonstrate the absolute identity of thought and being—an attempt which dominates the fundamental part of the work from the first to the last word." So Wilhelm Bender in his *Schleiermacher's Theologie mit ihren philosophischen Grundlagen dargestellt*, erster Theil, p. 73, Nördlingen 1876.

NOTE 37, page 177.—This doctrine of Ritschl's regarding the thing, that is, the thing of phenomenon in distinction from thing-in-itself, is quite in the line of Kantian thought, as exemplified, for example, in Lange. This latter writer says in his *Geschichte des Materialismus*, Bd. ii. Aufl. 3, p. 545: "In the very conception of thing, which is lifted as a unity out of the infinite complex of being, there is involved that subjective factor which is quite in order as a constituent of man as he actually is, but which, beyond man as he actually is, only helps to fill the gap for the absolutely inconceivable, the existence of which, though incognizable, we are compelled to assume, after the analogy of our own actuality." The empiricism of modern natural science arrives at exactly the same result as the apriorism of Kant. If nothing exist but the manifold of individual things, the unity which is expressed in every conception of a thing as such cannot be among the given existences. According to H. Helmholtz, that which becomes matter of perception through the senses is an aggregate of sensations. He describes this physiological theory of his as the empirical one, which assumes that "it is merely the unintelligible material of sensation that comes from external sources, whilst all representations are formed out of this material according to the laws of thought." See his *Die Thatfachen in der Wahrnehmung*, Berlin 1879, pp. 17 and 31. But Helmholtz's own exposition supplies the best evidence of the inconsistency in thinking with which natural science is chargeable when it thus comes into contact with Kantism. He treats it as self-evident that no positive determinations

can be predicated of "the real, that is, of Kant's thing-in-itself." Immediately thereupon, however, he remarks that, "What we can, however, arrive at is a knowledge of the order and laws that prevail in the realm of the actual, though they can only be expressed, it must be allowed, in a system of signs drawn from the impressions made on our senses" (p. 39). But in his view the actual is that "which lies behind the ever-changing phenomenal, and works upon us" (p. 38); in other words, the real or Kant's thing-in-itself. So that, although no positive determination can be predicated of this "real" or "actual," we are, notwithstanding, able to determine its order and laws. Fritz Schultze, in his *Philosophie der Naturwissenschaften. Eine philosophische Einleitung in das Studium der Natur und ihrer Wissenschaften*, Theil ii., Leipzig 1882, p. 244 ff., has explained what the natural science of the present day understands by the nature of the object, the thing, in perception. What we call an apple, he there tells us, "is a complex of sensations which reach consciousness through very different nervous channels; for example, through touch, sight, hearing, smell, taste: each supplies its quota to the formation of the idea apple in our consciousness." "The object, that is, the unity formed by the conjunction of the qualities or sensations, is in no case actually perceived. It is never anything but a purely internal product of thought. As to this matter we are very apt to deceive ourselves, and to fancy that we actually perceive the entire object; because at the moment when we perceive the one and the other of the qualities of an object known to us, we at once supply in thought the rest of the qualities, and thus our phantasy brings the whole before us; but it is only our phantasy that does so, not our capacity of sensuous perception." "All that sensuous perception gives us in any particular case is a multiplicity of diverse sensations carried to the brain by means of various nerve-channels. It is our own mind alone which effects their union into an object, and conceives them as the result of some external unity." F. A. Lange's word is true, therefore, "that every single thing, both every perceived object and the thing-in-itself too, is 'a creation of the soul.'" What is the real outcome of Ritschl's application of this very pro-



blematical doctrine of the thing-in-itself and its qualities to theology, we shall endeavour to show in the course of our inquiry.

NOTE 38, page 193.—The accusation has been brought against Ritschl's conception of God, that it is deistic; but this is not altogether just. So far as his conception of God has only the world and its idea for content, so far does it approximate rather to that of Lotze, who conceives of God as the one ground of the world, though at the same time also as personality, that is, as personality in the sense of the personality-pantheism; to which God is a personality whose actuality is the world. Ritschl, it is true, vigorously controverts pantheism. He also lays no stress on the living immanence of God in the world. God is to him rather transcendent. But inasmuch as he can assign no other content for the God who is thus transcendent to the world, save that He is the cause of all that is in the world, the question naturally suggests itself, What is the real difference, if there be any, between a conception of God so determined, and the conception of an immanent ground of the world? It is impossible to draw a real distinction between the abstract monad of Deism and the One of pantheism, of which the All is the correlate. Nor is the case altered by tacking the predicate love on to this abstract monad, and asserting that its essence is love. For, as Ritschl himself unintentionally proves, it is impossible to think such a monad as love. All, therefore, that remains of such a conception of God, when closely examined, is the general thought that He is the *prius* of the world—which is just what pantheism also teaches. Ritschl's conception of God has no specific content different from the content of the world. His God has no independent self-existence: the only subsistence He has is as the productive cause of the world and of the kingdom of God in it. This cause must not, however, be supposed to have an existence that is not related to the world; the only being or existence attributable to it is that which consists in this its causal relation to the world: it has therefore no being outside of and above the world, but solely in and by (*an*) the world. Ritschl's mode, therefore, of defining the essential nature of

God as love does not secure a conception of God with a specific content of its own. All that is accomplished is to push back the intramundane being of God into the antemundane sphere, and to represent the latter as the cause of the former. In addition, the antemundane character of that which is represented as the *prius* of the world turns out, on inspection, to be untenable; for not only can no light at all be thrown on what it is apart from its relation to the world, in consequence of Ritschl having put it out of his own power to arrive at any conclusion on that head, but his own statements positively necessitate the denial of any being to God save that which He has in relation to the world.

NOTE 39, page 194.—It is, moreover, not at all clear what Ritschl really means when he tells us that God must be conceived under the attribute of love. See *Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, Bd. iii. p. 257 f. If love is an attribute of God, God must be as different from the love which is this attribute as any subject is different from its attribute: the latter must not be treated as identical with the former.

NOTE 40, page 202.—See Georges' *Ausführliches lateinisch-deutsches Handwörterbuch*, on the words *absolutus* and *absolvere*. Forcellini does not distinguish carefully enough between the participial and adjectival meanings of the word *absolutus*. See the *Totius Latinitatis Lexicon opera et studio Ægidii Forcellini lucubratum*. Secundum tertiam editionem correctum et auctum labore variorum. Schneebergæ 1831. The *Glossarium Medicæ et Infimæ Latinitatis conditum a Domino du Cange* (Editio nova aucta a Leop. Favre. Tomus Primus, Niort 1883) says nothing regarding the word *absolutus* which can throw any light on its philosophical use. The word has not yet been treated in the *Archiv für lateinische Lexikographie und Grammatik mit Einschluss des älteren Mittelalters. Als Vorarbeit zu einem Thesaurus linguæ latinæ*, herausgegeben von Wölfflin, although it would appear that materials for an article on the same have already been collected.

NOTE 41, page 204.—Compare, for example, what Luther

remarks on John xiv. 9, in his *Exposition of the Book of Genesis*: "If thou believe in the revealed God and receive His word, the hidden God will be gradually revealed to thee. For 'he that seeth me seeth the Father also,' saith Christ in John xiv. 9. He who rejects the Son loses along with the revealed God the hidden God also, who has not revealed Himself. But if thou cling with strong faith to the revealed God, and art resolved in thine heart that thou wilt not lose Christ, even though thou shouldst be robbed of everything else that thou hast, thou mayst be certain of understanding the hidden God." Luther's *Sämmtliche Schriften*, herausgegeben von J. S. Walch, Theil ii. p. 263. Luther therefore is not of the opinion that the whole being of God is one and the same thing with or included in His being *for us*; but distinguishes the hidden God, or God as He is in and for Himself, from God as He is *for us*; namely, the God who has revealed Himself in Christ; yet whilst distinguishing the two, he holds fast by their unity.

NOTE 42, page 211.—Empiricism holds that "things themselves are never given save as individuals; and that the actual universal, so far as it is not conceived simply as a mark common to a number of things, is consequently a purely subjective image, the exclusive product of the intellect." See Dr. Hugo Spitzer, *Nominalismus und Realismus in der neuesten deutschen Philosophie mit Berücksichtigung ihres Verhältnisses zur modernen Naturwissenschaft*, Leipzig, Wigand 1876, p. 100.

NOTE 43, page 211.—Ritschl is very fond of appealing to Luther. But the irreconcilable antagonism between his theology and that of Luther is glaringly obvious at this very point. In Ritschl's view, original sin is nothing, is a mere abstraction and fiction. Luther's judgment, on the contrary, regarding original or indwelling sin is that, if it were not sin, there would be no actual sin at all. Original sin, he says, is not committed as all other sins are: no, it is, it lives, and it commits the other sins; it does not sin for an hour, or for a time, but wherever and so long as the person is, there also is

sin. It is of no good to prevent, improve, and heal externally, for the stem, root, and fountain of evil is within; the fountain-head must first be dried up, the root of the tree must be destroyed, otherwise it breaks out again in ten places whilst thou art stopping it at one: sin needs to be cured at the very centre.

NOTE 44, page 212.—If a man is compelled to exclaim with the psalmist, "Thine arrows stick fast in me, and Thy hand presseth me sore. There is no soundness in my flesh because of Thine indignation" (Ps. xxxviii. 2, 3), then must he confess that it is strong self-delusion to describe it all as pure love. See Tholuck, *Stunden christlicher Andacht*, xxii. p. 121. The immediate Christian feeling which expresses itself in these words hits the right point. Appeal is made to the fact that the love of God is holy love. *Either* this is a mere analytical judgment and a tautology, and then we reply, "Of course: how can the love of God be other than holy love?" But in that case, what is gained by appealing to the fact? *Or* else it is a synthetic judgment, and something is predicated concerning love which is not involved in that notion considered in itself. In that case another motive besides love is allowed to have operated in the work of reconciliation. Every attempt to explain the atonement solely by reference to the love of God must thus show itself to be futile.

NOTE 45, page 213.—Lotze's polemic against the "churchly" doctrine of the atonement is rooted also in his nominalistic individualism, and in a view of the relation of God to humanity which excludes the possibility that sin should inflict injury on the divine nature. "It is impossible," says he, "to speak of a satisfaction rendered to the divine honour by the sacrificial death of a single individual for the insult done to it by human sin. For apart from the somewhat coarse conception of God implied therein, this view rests on the utterly impossible notion of a solidaric unity of the human race, and of the possibility of its guilt and duty being transferred to a single representative." *Grundzüge der Religionsphilosophie*, § 99.

NOTE 46, page 215.—We recognise here the empirical point of view: its principle is, do not attempt to pass beyond what is given in experience—be satisfied with empirical data. (Compare Section II. chapter iii. of this work.) But the task of thinking out that which is accepted as given is thus shirked. How can a member of the sinful human race be sinless, and live in perfect fellowship with God? This is conceivable if He miraculously entered into humanity, not if He proceeded solely from humanity. But what means has Ritschl's theology at its disposal for rendering a relation like this conceivable? And if it is unthinkable, how can we keep our hold on the sinlessness of Christ and His perfect fellowship with God as a historical fact, as anything more than a mere ideal?

NOTE 46a, page 218.—It must be allowed, indeed, that Luther's further exposition of this thought is fitted to excite serious questionings.

NOTE 47, page 236.—It will be seen from this how far Thikötter is warranted in asserting that Lotze's theory of cognition, which Ritschl has adopted, is in accord with the Biblical assumption of the necessity of a revelation. See his *Darstellung und Beurtheilung der Theologie Albr. Ritschl's*, Aufl. 2, Bonn 1887, p. 10. Just the reverse is the real truth; for Ritschl's theory of cognition excludes every possibility of a revelation.

NOTE 48, page 239.—Ritschl insists on the banishment of general conceptions out of theology; but he does not himself conform to his own rule. In determining, for example, the essential nature of the Christian religion, he begins with a definition of what religion is in general; and what is this but to introduce a general conception into theology? He uses it for the purpose of settling what the essence of the Christian religion is. But in his view general conceptions are mere memory-images; they have no reality; they are simply abstractions.—Still further, the proper origin of religion can never be made matter of experience; for how can experience reach back so far? If all knowledge, as he

tells us, is derived from experience, whence can he derive his knowledge of the origin of religion?

NOTE 49, page 239.—On the antagonism between Lipsius and Ritschl in the matter of their conception of the essence of religion, see Lipsius, *Philosophie und Religion*, Leipzig 1855, Abschnitt 4. Lipsius there protests against the one-sided manner in which Ritschl emphasizes the element of freedom in relation to the world and ignores the mystical element, namely, dependence on God. The essence of religion, says he, "consists not in a relation of man to the world, but in a relation of man to God" (p. 208, cf. p. 213). Genuine piety is always a "life hidden in God" (see p. 189; cf. p. 233).

NOTE 50, page 240.—Ritschl denies, indeed, that he bases religion on morality; and asserts that he teaches the very reverse, and that his critics need first to make clear to themselves the distinction between ground of reality and ground of knowledge (*ratio essendi* and *ratio cognoscendi*) before imputing to him such a view of the relation of religion and morality. See *Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, Bd. iii. p. 211. But Ritschl refutes his own reply by assuming, when he undertakes the deduction of religion, that the moral consciousness is the real ground of religion. For his aim is not merely to show how we arrive at the *knowledge* of religious truth, but how man comes to have religion at all.

NOTE 51, page 241.—At the present moment this mode of explaining the rise of religion is designated the *psychological* method. It consists in taking for granted that man was originally destitute of religion, and in assuming that a moment arrived in his history when he began to be religious—when, in fact, religion rose into existence out of his own consciousness. This psychological explanation, therefore, takes for granted that religion is of purely human origin; whereas it used to be regarded as something which was bestowed originally on man at creation. This latter view is now treated as a metaphysical explanation of religion—as a metaphysical, theological, dogmatic opinion. The effort to



do away with metaphysics extends, therefore, to the question as to the origin of religion. But atheism itself may well be content with such a derivation of religion; for it presupposes neither the existence of God nor the creation of man by God, and accounts for the origin of religion as though there were no God, and man had developed himself out of nature. To explain religion psychologically is, therefore, to account for it naturally, *i.e. sine numine*. Like other historical phenomena, it came into existence in a natural way, under specific historical conditions. What is presupposed is that man in his earliest state of existence was destitute of religion; the problem to be solved is accordingly to account for the transition to religion which took place. But if man originally lacked religion, he must also have lacked a truly human consciousness; in other words, his state at the outset must have resembled that of the brute creation. The complaint that this natural explanation deprives religion of its value and dignity,—nay, inflicts the same loss on humanity,—has called forth the reply, that “the value and dignity of religion depend not on the manner of its origin, but solely on what it is in itself and on the services it has rendered to humanity;” and, “whether the first fathers of the human race were sons of God or gorillas cannot affect the real content, the value and the aims of human life:” so Eduard Zeller in *Vorträge und Abhandlungen*, zweite Sammlung, Leipzig 1877; see in particular, *Ueber Ursprung und Wesen der Religion*, p. 57 f.,—a dissertation which Lipsius styles “classical;” see his *Philosophie und Religion*, p. 203. A similar position is taken up by Wilhelm Bender in an article on “Darwinismus und Christenthum,” in the *Allgemeine Zeitung*, Beilage No. 100, 1883; as also more recently in his work, *Das Wesen der Religion und die Grundgesetze der Kirchenbildung*, Bonn 1886.

As though a derivation of religion which reduced it as to its essence to a product of the human mind, and must therefore regard it as conditioned at every stage of its development by the progress of the culture of humanity, must not necessarily have a decided influence on the value set upon it. As a matter of course, the Christian religion, too, on this view must be a product of the human mind, and could only have

come into existence in the way of natural development. Its claim to be a divine revelation and absolute truth would thus be set aside. Nay more, if man has issued forth from the brute creation, what is he else at any or every stage of culture but a developed animal? And seeing that religion, as such, rests on the supposition that the human mind is originally related to God, religion thus regarded would be sheer fiction. See also Dr. C. F. Heman's reply to Zeller in his *Der Ursprung der Religion*, p. 59 f.

O. Pfleiderer, who declared himself to be in substantial agreement with Biedermann and Lipsius as to this question, has given a sample of the mode in which we must represent to ourselves the rise of religion on the so-called natural theory in the first edition of his *Religionsphilosophie auf geschichtlicher Grundlage*. "Let us transport ourselves" (he says on p. 323) "into the mind of one of our primitive Aryan ancestors. In the midst of the terrors of night, surrounded by unseen dangers, he has become conscious of his helplessness and weakness; he has yearned for deliverance from the load that is weighing him down by some superior power; then day dawns, the sun rises, its rays dispel the darkness; at the same time, the anxiety that oppressed him vanishes; his soul becomes bright and free; and, in the kindly light, he thankfully greets the delivering gods." "Or he trembles at the raging of a storm; hostile powers seem to be about to swallow heaven, and to shatter the earth; then all becomes clear again; and between the breaking and scattering clouds the blue sky shines forth, and he sees therein the victory of the bright heavenly champions,—an Indra, an Apollo, a Pallas, and so forth." As though any of our Aryan forefathers could have had such thoughts, unless they had already been in possession of the idea of a divine being; in other words, without presupposing the very thing that has to be explained.

Ritschl considers the psychological explanation of religion to be inadequate, because it relates only to "the spiritual phenomena which are common to all men;" whereas in a community, therefore also in a religious community, individuals are not merely like, but also unlike each other, alternately acting and acted upon by each other; which

inequalities among men as associated in communities he considers fall within the province of ethics (*Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, Bd. iii. p. 185). One would accordingly suppose it to be right to style his explanation the ethical one, in distinction from the psychological one, which derives it from feeling. But in the very same connection he draws attention to the fact that the historical religions include in religion both knowledge, volition, and feeling. If religion is explained from these functions of the soul, it is psychologically explained, even though one of the functions should be preferred to the rest. Lipsius has expressed himself with praiseworthy clearness regarding the nature of the psychological determination of religion. In his *Lehrbuch der evangelisch-protestantischen Dogmatik*, Aufl. 2, 1879, § 16, where he says, "Psychological investigations into the origin and nature of religion must keep strictly to the point of view of scientific research; the business of which is to explain religion, not by a primal and absolutely supernatural revelation coming to man from without, but really out of the nature of the mental life of man and its inner development. From the rigidly psychological point of view no conception can be made in favour of any particular religion, not even in favour of Christianity, unless we are prepared in advance to abandon science for blind faith in authority." Ritschl's explanation of religion is also psychological, because he derives it from the nature of the human mind. But that which holds good of the essence of religion as such, holds good necessarily also of the Christian religion. If religion in general arises out of the mental life of man, the claim of the Christian religion to be a revelation must be denied, or explained in a sense which is equivalent to a denial.

NOTE 52, page 242.—One may accept it as strong witness to the evidence of the truth, that the consciousness of God is an essential element of human nature, when a writer like D. F. Strauss confesses that "even though it should be doubtful whether religion can be found among all peoples, and whether that which has sometimes been taken to be religion deserves the name, one may well content oneself with the

consideration that those peoples which lack the idea of God lack also true and properly developed humanity." See his *Christliche Glaubenslehre*, Bd. i. p. 394 f.

As a matter of fact, fragments of humanity have been found without religion—fragments which, while forming physically homogeneous masses, lack moral and intellectual unity; but a *people* without religion has never yet been discovered. Schelling has tried to show that the example of populations which have fallen from culture into barbarism, ought by no means to be applied to races which have lost their humanity, which lack not only religious ideas, but even law and the consciousness of obligation or order binding upon all. These latter, he maintains, rather exemplify what must have been the fate of humanity as a whole if, in that great primitive crisis which gave birth to nations, it had been rent asunder without preserving aught of its original unity; and if the cohesive force without which national existence is inexplicable had been entirely exhausted. See his *Einleitung in die Philosophie der Mythologie*, *Werke*, Abth. 2, Bd. i. p. 112 f.

NOTE 53, page 243.—Whilst we are distinctly opposed to the idea of an original atheism of the human mind, to which all those are committed who endeavour to account for the idea of God without God, we are equally far from imagining that humanity started with a system embracing God, or even with a conscious *conception* of God. The human mind is rather, as it were, originally interwoven, grown together with God. God forms part of itself, *a priori*, that is, belongs essentially to it prior to all actual movement. Those who think of humanity as having started with a conscious conception of God can scarcely have considered that "however they may represent to themselves the rise of the conception, whether they think man as having reached it by his own unaided efforts or as having received it by revelation; in either case they implicitly maintain that the human mind is originally atheistic,—a position to which in other respects they are definitely opposed."—"It is neither a communicated nor a self-generated knowledge of God which we ascribe to man originally; it is a *ground* preceding all thought and

knowledge; it is man's very *essence*, which binds and subjects him to God from the very outset, prior to all actual consciousness." See Schelling's *Philosophie der Mythologie, Werke*, Abth. 2, Bd. ii. p. 120 f.

NOTE 54, page 244.—When Kant assigns as an additional reason for the assumption of the existence of God, that the idea of a holy lawgiver will secure more respect for the moral law, he is inconsistent with his contention, that morality consists in paying homage to the law purely for its own sake. See Hegel's *Werke*, Aufl. 2, Bd. xv. p. 538, Berlin 1844. In this respect, therefore, the assumption of the divine existence lacks justification.

NOTE 55, page 245.—The practical realization of the autonomy and self-sufficiency of the human mind would thus be attempted, which the revolutionary intellect of a Fichte theoretically anticipated when he proclaimed the unconditioned freedom of the subject in the words, "Learn to have no needs save those which thou thyself canst satisfy; but the only good which thou canst certainly secure is freedom from self-reproach; so wilt thou be eternally proof against misfortune. Thou needest nothing outside thyself; not even a God: thou art thine own God, thine own Saviour, thine own Redeemer." See his *Anweisung zum seligen Leben*, p. 211, Berlin 1806. A conception of religion which degrades faith in God to a mere makeshift, would lie in the track of such a development of humanity.

NOTE 56, page 249.—"There is nothing imaginable in the world—nay more, there is nothing imaginable outside the world—which could be pronounced good, absolutely and without restriction, save only a *good will*." So Kant in his *Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten*, p. 1.

NOTE 57, page 249.—Ritschl's deduction of religion conducts us back, therefore, to the naturalistic view of which Eduard Zeller is an eloquent advocate. According to it, "the worship of God in the earliest and most imperfect forms of



religion proceeded mainly from an egoistic effort to bring the power of the gods into the service of human needs and wishes." See his *Vorträge und Abhandlungen*, zweite Sammlung, Leipzig 1877; *Ueber Ursprung und Wesen der Religion*, p. 45. The primitive forms of religion "took their rise chiefly in the sensuous needs of men, and sprang from the fears and hopes cherished with regard to them" (see p. 56; cf. p. 48). Zeller's view is the naturalistic revival of a heathen idea of the origin of religion which found expression in the proposition, "primus in orbe Deos fecit timor," namely, fear conjoined with the yearning for protection (see T. Lucretii *de rerum natura*, lib. v. 1217 ff.), and approximates dangerously to L. Feuerbach's assertion, that religion and the existence of God are grounded in the baseness either of mankind or of their circumstances. See his *Erläuterungen und Ergänzungen zum Wesen des Christenthums*, p. 381, in vol. i. of his Collected Works. Yet Zeller's derivation of religion has, at all events, the advantage over that of Ritschl of relative clearness. It seems an impossibility to form a clear idea of what the latter means when he tells us that though man had originally a *moral*, he had no religious consciousness. How low must have been his condition when he had as yet no religion of any kind, not even the lowest and coarsest! By what right do we ascribe a moral consciousness to him at this primitive stage—especially a moral consciousness of such vigour that it could become the creative potency of religion? It would seem far more natural to adopt Zeller's view, and to say that when religion came into existence, the moral consciousness was so imperfectly developed that it could afford very little assistance (Ed. Zeller, *l.c.* p. 32). And if religion proceeded from the moral consciousness, whence came this latter? If it were an original gift to man, part of the God-provided equipment of his nature, why not say the same of religion? But if religion arose in a natural way, under natural conditions, does not logical consistency require us to concede the same regarding the moral consciousness? Bender is therefore no more than self-consistent when he assumes that man began his existence in a condition essentially akin to that of the brutes. See his *Das Wesen der Religion und die Grundgesetze der Kirchen-*



*bildung*, p. 183, Bonn 1886. Ritschl's view, on the contrary, is nothing but a confused back-dating of the modern moral consciousness, as reflected, say, in the Kantian philosophy, to a primitive condition of humanity conceived as very low—in short, it is an anachronism.

His derivation of religion from the moral consciousness throws us back on the naturalistic view of the origin of religion and of man; the impulse, therefore, to which it owed its rise must have been sensuous-egoistic. In that case Feuerbach, too, was justified in declaring religion in general, and the Christian religion in particular, to be worthless, on the ground of its being the expression of a merely individual, in other words, of an egoistic interest. Ritschl does, indeed, urge against Feuerbach that as a rule it is impossible for the Christian faith in God to be egoistic, because in Christianity faith in God and moral duty in the kingdom of God are mutually related (*Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung*, Bd. iii. p. 193). But, on the other hand, it is to be remembered that he himself represents the struggle for good which bears on man's mundane position and relations, and not moral duty in the kingdom of God, as the impelling motive of religion in general, and of the Christian religion in particular.

But if the first kindling of religion in the human breast was due to reflection on the contrast between man's sense of independence and the pressure of the natural world, this implies that in his primitive condition he was without religion—that it was a condition in which he was still *ἄθεος*, without relation to God, without consciousness of God, and, in this sense, godless. This state of being far from God, of original godlessness, is supposed to contain the causes of religion, the first conditions of the succeeding religious development of the human soul. Were this true, faith would have its ground in non-faith, theism in atheism, which is scarcely more in harmony with the principle of sufficient reason than if the ultimate sources of reason were to be sought in unreason, and of mind in matter. In point of fact, these three points are so closely related to each other that they form in reality only so many momenta of one system, and wherever one of them is accepted it necessarily draws the other two in

its train. It is therefore only logical when that *bête noire* of the school of Ritschl, W. Bender, drives at full sail amid the applause of his new friends for the harbour of Darwinism. See H. Frickhöffer, *Die Grundlagen der Religion*, p. 16, 1887.

NOTE 58, page 251.—“Kant rejected the quest of metaphysics, ‘after the true bases of all being,’ on account of the hopelessness of success, and restricted its efforts to the discovery of the *à priori* elements of experience. It is questionable, however, whether this new problem is not equally insoluble with the old.” See Lange, *Geschichte des Materialismus*, Aufl. 3, Buch 2, p. 545.

NOTE 59, page 252.—As is well known, the four principles of all being, according to Aristotle, are—(1) ἡ ὕλη καὶ τὸ ὑποκείμενον, or potential being, not to be confounded with that which we call matter; (2) ἡ οὐσία καὶ τὸ τὶ ἦν εἶναι; (3) ὅθεν ἡ ἀρχὴ τῆς κινήσεως, or the *primum movens* or efficient cause; (4) τὸ οὐ ἕνεκα or τέλος, that is, the final cause (*causa finalis*). See Arist. *Metaph. c.g.* Bk. i. 983a, 25–32, where, however, ἡ ὕλη occupies the second place. Notwithstanding Aristotle’s polemic against Plato, the first two of the latter’s three principles may be compared with the first two of the four above adduced, namely—(1) τὸ μὴ ὄν or τὸ ἄπειρον (see Plato’s *Sophistes* and *Philebus*), termed τροφὸς καὶ τιθήνη τοῦ παντός, the provider and nurse of the universe (88 D); also ἡ τοῦ γεγονότος ὁρατοῦ καὶ πάντως αἰσθητοῦ μήτηρ καὶ ὑποδοχή, that is, mother and receptacle of sensible things (51 A)—a symbolical designation of the darkest and profoundest conception of all speculation, the conception of that which is not and is yet the principle of being, of what is. Zeller, in his *History of Greek Philosophy*, after the example of others, has falsely identified this conception with space,—a mistake which may have been occasioned by Plato’s use of the word *χώρα* to designate it; (2) πέρας, namely, the limiting and form-giving principle (see *Philebus*, 16 C). Schelling draws a parallel between his doctrine of the three world causes or potences and the related

view of Plato and Aristotle. When Ritschl speaks of the three supreme causes laid down by Aristotle as if they were formal conditions of knowledge, he shows about as much understanding of the subject as though one were to treat the potences by means of which Schelling sought to explain nature, man, and human history; or the ultimate principles of being to which Baader's philosophy, following Böhme, goes back, as subjective forms of cognition—of the same nature, say, as the categories of Kant.

NOTE 60, page 253.—*Βέλτιστον μὲν οὖν τὸ τῶν θεωρητικῶν ἐπιστημῶν γένος, τούτων δ' αὐτῶν ἡ τελευταία λεχθείσα* (that is, *philosophia prima*, or fundamental). *περὶ τὸ τιμιώτατον γὰρ ἐστὶ τῶν ὄντων* (Bk. xi. cap. 7, 1064b, 3 f.). *αἱ μὲν οὖν θεωρητικαὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἐπιστημῶν αἰρετώτεραι, αὐτῇ (i.e. the primal philosophy) τῶν θεωρητικῶν* (Bk. vi. cap. 1, 1026a, 22 f.). The words are quoted according to the text of Bonitz. In view of such passages, one asks in amazement how any one could possibly imagine that Aristoteles regarded metaphysics as having no more than the sorry value attributed to it by Ritschl.

NOTE 61, page 253.—What Ritschl is concerned to show is that "his theology is the genuine product of a faith based on Luther and the Protestant confessions." See Koffmanne, *Abriss der Kirchengeschichte des 19 Jahrhunderts*, p. 129, 1887. His own express declarations show this.—Th. Harnack, in his *Luther's Theologie mit besonderer Beziehung auf seine Versöhnungs und Erlösungslehre*, p. 484 (zweite Abtheilung, Erlangen 1886), points out the "glaring discrepancy" between Luther's faith and theology on the one hand, and the "professedly Reformation tendencies" of Ritschl's theology on the other, despite the efforts industriously put forth by Ritschl and his party to drag Luther in and willy nilly make him a representative of their views.

NOTE 62, page 258.—One of Ritschl's pupils has considered it his duty, indeed, expressly to state that Ritschl's doctrine is not the same as that of Alb. Lange. This, how-

ever, was unnecessary. The views of the two men are not identical; yet Alb. Lange did but draw the logical consequences of principles laid down by Ritschl. Either the content of the Christian religion is truth-in-itself, and then it must be truth also for theoretical thought, whether recognised as such or not; or it is not truth-in-itself, and then it does not become truth simply because it is regarded as such by the religious consciousness. If the religious consciousness hold that for truth which is not truth-in-itself, it is the prey of a delusion. But if religion is self-delusion, Feuerbach was right when he demanded, as we saw he did, that the human mind should free itself from it.

NOTE 63, page 274.—“To deny all determinations is equivalent to denying being itself. Being without determinations is being which is not an object (or subject), and such being is nullity. When man strips God of all determinations, he reduces God, so far as he himself is concerned, to a merely negative being. For the truly religious man God is not a being without determinations; because He is to him a veritable actual being. The undeterminateness of God and the unknowableness which is identical therewith is simply a fruit of recent times—a product of modern unbelief.” So Ludwig Feuerbach, *Das Wesen des Christenthums*, 2nd ed. p. 21, Leipzig 1843. What is there said with regard to God may be analogously applied to other realities of the Christian faith.

NOTE 64, page 275.—The idea of twofold truth has been sharply controverted and repelled by O. Pfleiderer. Even the scholasticism of the Middle Ages was acquainted with this talk about “two sorts of truth,” religious and philosophical, which were supposed to have nothing to do with each other. The Sorbonne knew perfectly well what it was about when it condemned this view; for the dualism thus advocated was but a cloak concealing, as it does at the present day, the scepticism of a disintegrating nominalism. The breach thus effected with the faith of the Church could only conceal itself, consciously or unconsciously, behind this mask of “two kinds of truth,” till the radicalism of the Renaissance came and tore

it off. See O. Pfleiderer, *Religionsphilosophie*, 2nd ed. Bd. i. p. 516. Kant's separation of the practical from the theoretical reason is but the continuation of the other; and Lange's *Standpoint of the Ideal* is the commentary on that.—Lipsius, too, insists that this talk about two kinds of truth shall be given up once and for ever. See his *Philosophie und Religion*, p. 197. On Ritschl's twofold method of treating Christian doctrine in relation to that of Kant, see Dorner, *System der Christlichen Glaubenslehre*, Bd. ii. part ii. p. 606 (translated).

NOTE 65, page 277.—Ritschl struggles with all his might and main against what is generally termed *Natural Religion*. But the thing which he for his part opposes thereto is the very thing which he controverts. Matters are not altered by simply laying stress on the historical revelation through Christ, as long as Christ has no other significance than that of having first realized that which forms the content of natural religion. At the same time, one thing must not be overlooked. It may be quite correct to call attention to the fact that Ritschl leans on Kant; but it is also plain enough that the profounder aspect of the Kantian philosophy has had little or no influence on his thought. Kant endeavoured to penetrate behind all that had first come into existence, that was derived; he pointed the mind away from all that is merely external to its own inner depths; he searched for that which is ultimate and original, that which cannot be itself deduced, but by means of which the world of actuality should become capable of rational explanation; and this is the creative element in his philosophy which could not but burst the imperfect form first assumed by it, and thus give rise to systems that necessarily passed beyond the position held by its originator. Ritschl's theology is exclusively the outgrowth of the empirical and moralistic tendency of the Kantian philosophy, in conjunction with a subjectivistic theory of cognition.

NOTE 66, page 281.—It is scarcely necessary to remark that we are speaking of metaphysics not merely in the sense of a sum of epistemological investigations.



NOTE 67, page 281.—In this case it would be necessary to blot out of our catechisms everything that is comprehended under the title of "false metaphysics." Fr. Paulsen proceeds quite consistently from his empirical point of view when he classes the metaphysics of the Catechism with the speculations of the Greek philosophers. He says, "The speculation of many a Greek philosopher, and the metaphysics of many a catechism, are now-a-days no longer tenable." See the *Vierteljahrschrift für wissenschaftliche Philosophie*, herausgegeben von R. Avenarius, Jahrg. 1, p. 50, 1876.

NOTE 68, page 282.—The hyper-historical tendency, which, in obedience to the canon that Scripture has to do with the Eternal only so far as it has entered into time, thrusts the transcendent and metaphysical into the background, has found characteristic expression in an interpretation of the Prologue to the Gospel of John which many highly approve. It is said, Jesus is termed the Logos so far as He is the personal Word of God to man, the personal Word which God spake to the world, and hence, as the Incarnate One, as the One who appeared in the flesh. If this interpretation be correct, verse 14, where it is said, "the Word became flesh," can only mean, "He who as the Incarnate One is called the Word, became flesh;" that is, He who had become flesh, became flesh. This thought would not even be a mere tautology, but a flat contradiction, and as illogical as if one were to say, "Jesus of Nazareth became man." It scarcely needs remarking that this objection cannot be set aside by a reference to the distinction between becoming man and becoming flesh. On one condition alone can this statement of John be intelligible, namely, on the assumption that Christ was the Logos before He became man.

NOTE 69, page 286.—We do not, of course, intend to assert the possibility of even an adequate knowledge of God, much less of an absolute knowledge—a knowledge that sounds the depths of the divine nature. All that we can attain is an indirect, incomplete, mirror-like knowledge (1 Cor. xiii. 12); but it may for all that be as far as it goes objectively true.



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BY

HERMANN LOTZE.

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'It would be impossible to give in these columns any adequate idea of the range of topics with which this brilliant book deals. Suffice it to say that of the nine books into which it is divided, the first and the last give a tolerably complete account of Lotze's metaphysics; books ii., v., and vi. are a thoroughgoing treatise on psychology; book iii. expounds the main principles of biology; book iv. the chief problems of anthropology; while books vii. and viii. crown the whole with a philosophy of history. These diverse subjects are treated with great skill and mastery: Lotze, besides being a philosopher, was a professional biologist and an important worker in psychology. He wrote, besides, the best history we have of æsthetics, and was generally the German of widest culture who has approached the problems of philosophy. He was well equipped, it must be confessed, for the mighty task he had set himself. He recognises himself that his work was not a continuation of the Kantian movement, largely as he was influenced by Kant and still more largely by Herbart and Hegel, but took up rather the humanistic movement of the eighteenth century. He tried to do in the nineteenth century what Lessing and Herder had done in the eighteenth—give the education of the human race in history. His book thus deals with man as he is in himself and in his relation to the world and God, and with the historic influences which have shaped man in time. Armed thus with all the culture of his time, he deals with the chief problem of his time—the development of humanity.

'Sufficient has been said to show the interest of these volumes. For that anomalous being "the general reader," the middle books are of chief attraction. Thus the chapter on "Man and Brute" in book iv., that on "Speech and Thought" in the following book, the whole of book vi., and much of books vii. and viii. are filled with ingenious treatment of the different aspects of civilisation and its history. Nor is this part of the book full of vague generalizations. Lotze's exposition is not above dealing with the philosophic aspects of cookery or of dress, on which, indeed, there is an admirable sketch of a theory (i. 592), not untouched by the light of humour. The theory of temperaments receives

interesting development at Lotze's hands: the psychological differences of the sexes, a rapid characterization of the chief nations of antiquity, a modification of Buckle's views on the influences of external nature, are among the many admirable parts of the book. The style also adapts itself to the matter most suitably, though it is, perhaps, a trifle too elaborate. Few philosophic books of the century are so attractive both in style and matter.

'But it is the spirit of the treatment that makes the opportuneness of this book in the present condition of English speculation. Lotze was in his early days one of the leaders in that recognition of the close interconnection of mind and body which led in one-sided development to the crude materialism of Moleschott and Büchner. He never deserted this position; but he combined with it the best strain of German idealism, and the "Microcosmus" holds an even balance between the opposing tendencies. He gives its due place to the physical side of man's nature; but he also estimates its true worth. In his own words, he shows "how universal is the extent and yet how subordinate the significance of the mission which mechanism has to fulfil in the structure of the world." His views thus stand at the meeting point of the two great constructive movements in European thought during this century—the building up of a *Weltanschauung* from below out of the first principles of the sciences, and a reconstruction of these principles from above out of the metaphysical presuppositions of the followers of Kant. He was himself peculiarly fitted for such a mediating position. A physiologist of eminence, trained in Müller's school, he was at the same time influenced by all the best elements in the schools of Herbart and Hegel.

'Herein consists his significance for present-day thought in England. If we mistake not, two schools dominate speculation in this country. The scientists, with their all-embracing, all-explaining doctrine of evolution, are faced by the ideal construction of the universe advocated by the so-called Hegelians. Mr. Herbert Spencer and the late Professor Green are the names representative of these opposing tendencies in contemporary speculation, which start from opposite poles of thought and scarcely meet along their diverse lines of speculation. So far as we know, no attempt at reconciliation or combination has been made by any English thinker. A few polemical tracts have dealt with the points of difference of the two schools; but for the most part they have been pursuing tunnels of thought, so to speak, which seem never destined to meet. The field of metaphysics is being treated in two entirely different ways, with the result of confirming the popular impression that this field is most infertile, yielding only useless crops of sterile verbiage. Metaphysics has never reached

so low a state in general reputation as in these days, when it is, perhaps, being more actively cultivated than at any previous time in England. Even at the time when the last of the Humists, J. S. Mill, was dealing heavy blows at the incomplete fusion of Scottish and German thought in Sir William Hamilton, men thought there was something worth struggling for in the metaphysical points in dispute. But nowadays there is not even the interest of polemical amenities to attract the attention of cultivated men to the claims of metaphysics. There is no common ground, and there can be no rivalry.

'It is at this point that Lotze's "Microcosmus" enters the current of English speculation. He was, perhaps, primarily an idealist; but yet at each step of his work he takes count of the naturalistic position. He professes, and, so far as we can ascertain, professes with justice, to accept all the facts that science can offer for the elucidation of the various problems of which he treats, and at the same time brings them into relation with the transcendental position won once for all by the genius of Kant. Herein consists his significance for us in this most unmetaphysical island of England. It is doubtful whether the profound distrust of Englishmen for all that bears the name of metaphysics will yield even to the reasonings of Lotze that the world of reality is a world of relations. But even the unmetaphysical Englishman must recognise that Lotze has fast hold of what *he* considers real, and yet points to the necessity of a higher reality, giving form and connection to the totality of the real which we call the world. It cannot but have a beneficial effect on our thought to see the evolutionist and Kantian positions combined, and in a measure reconciled, in this book of Lotze's.

'Whether his reconciliations will be finally accepted we should hesitate to say. On reading Lotze one's first impression is to say, "A greater than Kant is here." The wide culture, the clear style, the ready mastery of facts and principles, the skill in reconciliation and systematization, seem to promise a richer feast of reason than is afforded by the arid style and pedantic formalities of the illustrious *Kritiker*. But further reflection and perusal scarcely bear out this high estimate. After all he does not reconcile, he only combines, the two methods of metaphysics; for your scientist uses metaphysics, and very bad metaphysics too, as a rule. And this want of consistent application of leading principles is a cardinal defect. It is by his systematization

that the philosopher advances truth. He combines knowledge into ever higher generalizations, and the amount of consistency he achieves in this is the measure of his success. Nor are his inconsistencies valueless—they indicate to succeeding investigators the points at which new efforts are required. Thus Kant's *Ding-an-sich* in all its inconsistency led on to the constructive efforts of the great Epigoni. Now it cannot be said that Lotze's work offers either the rounded theory or the inconsistencies. His efforts to reconcile science and idealism can scarcely be said to be fortunate either in systematization or in inconsistency. His remarkable revival of Leibnitzian monadology in the view that atoms have an internal psychical constitution cannot be called successful. It reminds us of capsules enclosing ideas, and seems scarcely better than Hæckel's platitude-soul as an explanation of the union of soul and body. Lotze does not try so much to unite naturalism and idealism as to exhibit them side by side and to claim for each its rights. Now this is, as we have before said, the exact condition of English speculation as a whole, which is, therefore, mirrored with remarkable accuracy in Lotze's work. Hence the interest and importance attaching to it, to which we have now drawn sufficient attention. It seemed better to point out its special adaptation to English wants than attempt the impossible task of commenting on the multifarious problems with which the "Microcosmus" deals.

'We had almost ceased without saying a word about the manner in which it has been translated. This is, perhaps, an unconscious tribute on our part to the fact that the English version rarely reads as a translation. The task of splitting up Lotze's rather complicated sentences and paragraphs into shorter ones has been performed with remarkable success by the late Miss E. Hamilton, the great logician's daughter, and by Miss E. E. C. Jones, a Gorton student, who has continued and completed the work. Nor has accuracy been sacrificed to stylistic requirements. Much skill has been shown in preserving in English the shades of metaphysical meaning with which German abounds. Even the long list of errata shows, what such lists rarely do, great care in revision. We have tested the translation in several places, and have almost invariably found that any improved renderings we could suggest have been anticipated in the errata. In short, this is an admirable translation of an excellent work.'

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